

The Home Department.

..Conducted by..
Helen W. McVey.

Empty Hands.

A multitude of cares encompassed me,
Stood at my elbow, hung about my
knee;
Hedged me away from all the world
outside,
Thronged in my path, if to escape I
tried.
And thus, from mingling with my
kind debarred,
Often I mourned and felt my lot was
hard;
Slipped from the clinging fingers,
Sighed for rest,
Hushed the shrill tongues and deemed
the silence best.

One day God took my cares unto him-
self;
I need no longer toil, for love or pelf.
Free am I now, to roam to far-off
lands,
Or sit in silence, with my empty
hands.
Alone I go; as lonely I return;
And none remains to feel for me con-
cern.

No noisy shouts, no clamorous tongues
in glee
To break the silence—all is hushed
to me.
No clinging fingers clutching at my
dress;
No tumbled curls upon my bosom
press.
But now—dear Lord! if I could ope
the door
And know my cares would meet me as
of yore,
I'd give—ah, with what gladness, I
would give
All the slow weary years I yet must
live!
I wander always—praying always
vain—
O, Lord, dear Lord, give me my cares
again! —Selected.

With a Child's Faith.

The holiday season, with its hilari-
ous happiness, is ended, and the boys
and girls pour out of happy homes,
swarming along the streets once more
to the school rooms. After a sturdy
wrestle with their exuberant spirits,
they will settle down to the work be-
fore them, and the fun and frolic of
the vacation days will become a dream.

When the day is ended, they tumb-
le out of the school room doors, a
noisy, laughing, shouting army of
healthy, happy bodies and care-free
hearts; they "take no thought of the
morrow;" the "cares of bread" do not
enter their restless minds; their one
thought is to reach the coasting hill
or frozen ponds as quickly as possible.
What zest! what riotous enthusiasm!
No one thinks of supper; it will be
waiting for them at the proper time.
No one is brooding over how to "make
both ends meet"—they trust all that
to fathers, mothers, and guardians.
Warmly clad and well-fed, armed with
skates, hand-sleds, and other sources
of amusement, they rush away to the
play-grounds, pell-mell! alive only to
the fun before them. The "cares of
riches," or the "cross of poverty" is
not for them.

We, who are grown up, are as much
children as are these. We, too, are
dependent upon a higher power for the
comforts and blessings of this life.
Do what we will, we cannot help our-
selves against the rulings of Provid-
ence. With all our cares and anx-
ieties, we cannot bring about the good,
or avert the disastrous. For the food
we eat, the clothes we wear, the roof
that shelters us, the fuel that keeps
us warm, we must trust to a higher
ruling than our own abilities. All we

can do, is to wisely and cheerfully
use the means at our command; do the
best we know how, and tacitly hope
that all things will work together for
our good. We must do as the children
do—trust. Over us, the Father keeps
watch and ward, and we have His
promise that the help we need will be
given—not always, perhaps, yet in
God's own way and time it will come.
We have but to trust in the higher
wisdom. We can neither help nor
hinder, save as we work with His will.

And thus, while planning for the
work of the dawning New Year, it is
well to remember that whatever is
given us, whatever of joy or sorrow,
victory or defeat, may be ours, a wise
hand rules, an eye that can look for-
ward, even unto the end, will trace
out the paths for our feet, and in this
path we should go forward, cheerfully,
hopefully, courageously, trusting, as
little children trust, in the tender
watch-care of Him who "so loved the
world."

Growth of the Soul.

It is a recognized fact that, as a
general rule, we are just what we
make of ourselves; that the position
we fill at any given time is the one
for which we are best fitted at that
particular moment.

But not a few of us feel that we
are capable of better things; of filling
a higher place; of doing a larger work,
yet we do not quite know how to go
about getting into our "proper

be honest with ourselves, and this
will develop within us a habit of hon-
esty toward others. Faithfulness in
little things alone will give you ruler-
ship over the great ones. One may
not sit idly down and wait for some
coveted good to fall to his hands. If
it did, he would not know how to
make the best use of the unearned
gift. Take whatever offers; do what-
ever falls to your hands, and do it
well. This exercise of doing is the
apprenticeship which gives us the
skill of experienced hands, and only
by doing, conscientiously, the little
things do we prove our fitness to be
trusted with the greater. One would
scarcely care to trust important mat-
ters to hands that scorned, or did
slightingly the so-called trifles.

I like to think of Jesus, the God-
man, kneeling before his human
brethren, washing their feet. It was
a menial task—one which the com-
monest servant could have performed;
yet it was not small in his eyes; it
was part of the work assigned to him,
and he did it with a grace which we
know was divine. In performing for
his brethren these menial services,
he glorified them for all time.

Nothing that should be done, was a
trifle; or of too small moment for his
patient, faithful human hands to do,
and through all his sorrowful earth-
life, the dear Lord set himself faith-
fully to do the "will of the Father."
His reward came—not on earth, but
in the glory of the promotion to
which his absolute faithfulness in the
discharge of every work given, en-
titled him.

Intemperance.

Girls, beware of the young man who
uses intoxicants, no matter how
"moderately." Human nature is very
much the same, everywhere. In
America we have been used to warn
men against the use of intoxicating
liquor because of the impetuosity of
the American character. It is said
that the American goes wild over
whatever he undertakes; becomes too
enthusiastic, and he drinks liquors as
enthusiastically as he does anything
else. The certainty of his losing con-
trol of his appetite, if he drinks at
all, is almost absolute.

Facts do not seem to sustain the
opinion, once prevalent, that the
drinking people of other nations are
safe from the results which follow
indulgence here. The French, so of-
ten cited as a sober people, although
indulging in the lighter wines, are be-
coming much addicted to intemper-
ance, and are substituting stronger
wines for the lighter ones. Appetite
is about the same, everywhere. The
Chinaman becomes a slave to the
opium habit, as will any one, of what-
ever nationality, who uses it. With
indulgence, the appetite for intoxi-
cants grows; and, while it may take
the Frenchman a little longer to be-
come a drunkard than it does the nigh-
strung, nervous American, he reaches
the level at last. The German may
stick to his beer for a longer time,
but he, too, will reach the end in
time. The only safe rule is to let it
alone. If men will not drink, there
will be no drunkards, but if they do,
beginning ever so lightly, they will
find it grow harder and harder to sub-
due the craving until appetite will
rule them to their destruction.

Bargains.

Immediately after the holiday sea-
son, the counters of the various stores
are piled high with the left-overs from

the holiday trade, and the daily pa-
pers come out in regular placard
style, telling of the wonderful values
simply given away "at your own
price," at these marked-down, mid-
winter sales.

If you are a judge of values, now
and then a real bargain may be se-
cured, but the most of the goods are
of a cheap quality, or in some way
damaged, and simply "marked-down"
from previously inflated prices which
always obtain during the hurly-burly
shopping of "the season." A really
good article will always bring a good
price, and such things, if not disposed
of at something near their value, may
be laid away, or sold to smaller mer-
chants to very good advantage, and
merchants are not often found giving
dollars for dimes. Sometimes, a real-
ly good article, from the fact of its
having been used in display windows,
or as a sample, and thus soiled by the
dust, smoke, or much handling, or,
not having found favor in the eyes of
purchasers from some cause of color,
weave, etc., is put upon the counter at
reduced price, and if the article or
good is washable, or otherwise clean-
able, or even if it may be dyed, it is
as well to buy it. But unless you
are a judge of quality, it is safe not to
invest too heavily in "bargain goods."

A great many women—and men,
too—buy things for which they have
not, and, in all probability, never will
have, the slightest use, simply because
it is cheap, and they think they may
want it at some future time. Such
people have any quantity of odds and
ends lying around, going to waste,
and when they really do need some-
thing of the kind, find that what they
have will not suit the need of the
hour, and have, at last, to buy new to
fit the purpose, while the "unavail-
able" is still taking up room and will
eventually find its way to the waste
heap.

It is not always economy to buy
new goods with which to piece out an
old garment, but if one must buy, it is
just as well to buy a cheaper grade,
and thus the whole garment, new and
old, will wear out together.

The Mission of Pain.

"I always know that one has suf-
fered when I get the impression of
kindness and sympathy from him.
Petty cares and troubles often em-
bitter one, but great suffering and
pain develop the feeling of human
brotherhood. I doubt very much
whether one has ever progressed ex-
cept through pain. In the voices of
the great souls of all ages may be
heard a suggestion of the minor note.
Those who have suffered—who have
felt the deadly grip upon the heart—
understand their fellow-men and wo-
men, and find it easy to speak the
kindly word, send the loving glance,
give the warm hand-clasp. Their
blood is warm and their hearts beat
strong—they understand without be-
ing told. Much of the best of life
has come to us through sorrow—when
we understand this we know many
things."—New Thoughts.

Questions and Answers.

A correspondent asks how she can
bake bread so as to avoid having a
hard crust on it.

It is not altogether in the baking.
When you have moulded your dough
and placed it in the pans to rise, take
a little sweet, fresh butter, or clean,
sweet lard, warm it, and, with a little
roll of old cloth used brushwise, ap-
ply the warm lard or butter to the ex-
posed surface of each loaf. Put on
the dough all it will absorb by the
time it is ready for the oven—experi-

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