

"Well, surely the Graingers have far more claim upon you than she has. It does not seem good form, to me, for you to throw them up. Besides, you don't seem to care the least about me."

Hereupon the young man began striding backwards and forwards so as not to be obliged to see the flushed face and glistening eyes turned towards him.

"If it were a question of staying with you, Gerald, you know I should not hesitate a moment, but our two grand incomes put together would not keep us as you would like to be kept. I don't mean that you are extravagant, dear," continued Nellie, going to her brother's side, and slipping her hand through his arm, and beginning to pace up and down with him. "You must meet people, and go to the conversaziones, and dress respectably, and all that sort of thing. As for 'good form,' I really think the Jacksons were quite miserable when you thought of leaving, and certainly you owe them something. I love the Graingers dearly, but, of course, they don't really need me, nor do I know where they would put me when Flo and the three boys are home from school." Gerald made no remark, and the pair continued their walk in silence.

"You see," Nellie resumed, "I am not clever enough to be a regular governess, or we might manage."

"Mr. Jackson says you are far better educated than half the girls who get crammed at college with a lot of things they can't digest."

"Very good of Mr. Jackson, I'm sure" rejoined Nellie, laughing; "but, after all, I can't talk about things like girls who have attended classes under grand professors and all the rest of it. Look at Ruth, how much sparkle she has since she came back from that High School."

"Sparkle, yes—but she is naturally——"

"No, now we are not keeping to the point. I can't be a governess, that is settled. And dressmaking—well, I can just manage to make a decent dress for myself; still, I——"

"Nonsense, Nellie! Do you think I am wretch enough to let you work to help to keep me!" exclaimed Gerald. Then, with a softened look, he put his arm round her and drew her to him. "You dear little sis!"

"Halloa! what couple of young lovers have strayed this way?" cried a strong, cheery voice, and, looking round, the so-called lovers confronted their neighbour, Mr. Grainger, and his daughter Ruth.

"We were just coming to see you, Nellie," she said, as she kissed her friend; then looking up at Gerald with a pair of mischievous brown eyes, added, "I am so sorry to have interrupted such a pretty domestic drama!"

Gerald flushed to the roots of his hair at being caught in an act so inconsistent with his notion of manly stoicism, for he, in common with most young men of his age, was apt to consider such demonstrations of affection as only fit for the feebler sex.

The kind-hearted farmer, taking Nellie's hand, looked at her thoughtful young face, saying—

"Cheer up, my child; we shall find the right way, depend upon it. You and Gerald come home and have a bit of supper with us, and we'll talk matters over."

(To be continued.)



WHAT GIRLS CAN DO TO HUSH "THE BITTER CRY."*

By Mrs. S. A. BARNETT, of Whitechapel.



"They are young; let them enjoy themselves," say the loving mothers and indulgent elders; but to many a girl her own enjoyment is but a poor substitute for what she feels might be her better life, and so she sometimes takes to pleasure recklessly and in undue proportion; or else she frets against her lot, often refusing—because she cannot have her share of the more earnest side of life—the wholesome enjoyment which follows its pleasures.

On the other hand, and who, knowing the ugly pains and sins in the world, can wonder, the careful mother spares no pains to protect and guard her child from contact with such things. Over and over again one hears a parent say, "My daughter wanted to take a district, but I could not let her face the things she might meet there." And with these tender mothers I heartily sympathise, but none the less so with the would-be helpful daughters.

It is about the work which can be done by girls without running the risks of meeting harmful wrong that I am going to speak.

For simplicity's sake, let me divide it into two groups—work which can be done at home, and work which can be done outside.

For home work there is sewing; and lately there has been set going in East London a clothing club on rather a new plan. Instead of meeting for an afternoon's needlework, the workers agree to make two, three, four, or six garments in a month, according to the time, capacity, etc., at their disposal. The clothes, already cut out, are sent to each worker, who makes them at her leisure and returns them to the secretary at the end of the month. Any girl can do this. It is dull, but helpful—distinctly helpful, as those of us who come face to face with the poor know; helpful to the pinched mother, who, no less careful of her daughter than the wealthy parent, finds "no clothes" an insufferable barrier to getting her girl into "good service;" helpful to the girl who does not want to be bad "and mix with the rough 'uns," but who, unhelped almost, must, so long as social conditions, rate of wages, and the estimate of women is what it is.

Then there is painting. What shoals of Christmas cards we all get, and what becomes of them? They might be made into dadoes for the wards of workhouse schools. Those places are, as a rule, drear and barren. The children have nothing to look at, and the pause-time of illness loses half its value be-

* A paper read at a meeting summoned by the Metropolitan Society of Voluntary Workers—secretary, Miss A. R. Marten, 4, Vanburgh Terrace, Blackheath.

cause the well-known walls have no bright ideas to give the empty brains; no grand thoughts taught through mottoes or texts to sink in and arise as watchwords in the future battle of life.

Any girl can arrange Christmas cards, either in scrapbooks for the bed-ridden babes, or, if pasted on calico, and connected with painted flowers and sprays or quaint wood-work drawing, they make admirable screens, or wall-decoration as dadoes. They must be varnished if so used; but that need present no difficulty. The carpenter at the schools for which the gift is purposed will do that bit of technical work, and the same holds good for mottoes. They can be put up if cut out and coloured, and it must be acknowledged that in all senses it is helpful work to make permanent and beautiful the grand words of the greatest minds for the poverty-dulled brain of the orphan or deserted child—the "nobody's bairn."

As to doll-dressing, ball and toy making, they hardly need mentioning, except, perhaps, to say that the supply is not nearly equal to the demand, and that the thousands of children hidden behind the tall even walls of our pauper-schools have, in spite of discipline, a most hungry love for dolls and toys, which loving hunger cannot be satisfied unless the lady girls will be more industriously helpful at home.

But there is yet another way in which girls can help the poor from the home precincts, and inasmuch as it is to do direct with people and not things, it stands on a higher level than what has been before suggested. It is to welcome and entertain as friendship dictates one, two, or more friendless girls. What is a little scrub-er-drub-drub-maid-of-all-work to do with her holidays; not too frequent, it is certain, coming as they do, once in three months?

"Why, Jane, it must be more than two months since you came to see me, isn't it?" I said to such a girl yesterday.

"Yes, mum, it's five months since I had a holiday; but then I've nowhere else to go to, only to come and see you, and I didn't like to trouble you so often, so I haven't asked for a holiday."

That remark made me feel ashamed. Five months since she had a holiday; and then what a one it was! to spend a day in Whitechapel, with its noise and bustle, dependent on what I could hastily plan on such short notice for her pleasure.

Girls in the country easily, girls in the town helped by the Zoological Gardens, the parks, and the shops, could make such holidays glad, golden, growing days for their humbler sisters. Poor children! and how helpful they, too, would be. This same Jane brought me a little bundle of children's clothes which she had made "In the evening, when I've done the work, out of my old things and some the missus gave me to cut up." They were rather worn, she explained, but she thought they might be nice for some poor little child.

But if I begin on how to help our children-servants I shall never stop, so I had better go back at once to what helpful girls can safely do outside their homes.

They can do quantities of handwork. Cover books. One afternoon a week would keep a parish library tidy, and so by its neatness and order teach other lessons than the books themselves convey. Mend maternity-bags. The baby clothes soon get out of order; two or three pairs of hands could keep them straight; and during the few weeks of such enforced rest there is time for the mother to note the needlework done by the unknown friends, and maybe get her standard raised thereby, though I fear that the old days, when "to look at a lady's needlework did one good," are gone for ever.

Then they can play; play in the playgrounds of the National or Board schools; teach games—games of skill, and not chance.

If you watch the children in the streets, you will nearly always find that they are playing games of chance, fostering the gambling spirit which does so much to wreck patient work and well-ordered character. The lady-girls can teach games which, played under rule, become masters for the lesson of self-control. They might, by regular, hearty work, turn the London play-yards into what the playing fields of Eton and Harrow are—the places where the best seeds of character take root and sprout.

These playmates are dreadfully needed in the pauper schools; and here girls living in the suburbs (whose mothers are fearful of the perils of a short railway journey) can be specially useful, for the workhouse schools are nearly all in the suburbs. It is a little difficult to obtain admittance, for the guardians are apt to look askance at "ladies' interference," as I am afraid they often and erroneously term our kindly efforts; but still the Society,* in response to whose request I am speaking to-day, might get over that barrier if they had a sufficient number of offers in this direction. Half-holidays are generally on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and any girl would (I should judge from my experience) be able to declare, after the first shyness had worn off, that they were really "good times." The children in their bare yards, with little or nothing to play with, heartily welcome a live, grown-up plaything, and the small lessons in fairness, unselfishness, good temper, and tenderness for the weaker or younger, come forcibly, and are received graciously, from "their dear lady, who makes such fun."

Among the poor and sad there is such a

* Metropolitan Society of Voluntary Workers.

dearth of pleasure and play that a whole army of pleasure-creators and play-makers could not meet all their needs. There are entertainers wanted at parish and congregational parties—not people to necessarily sing, play, and perform, but those who, in bright gowns and with the halo which rest and refinement give in the eyes of the work-worn and rough-living, will mix among them, making the picture-book interesting with gay chat, and the game of some importance, because played against such a keen opponent.

Then concerts can be got up, music can be given, and if the performers will not require a giant hall and a crowded audience, they will be able, perhaps, to give more pleasure, as they gladden the mothers at their weekly meeting, or amuse the men, resting after the day's labour, in the tobacco-charged atmosphere of the Penny Club room.

Then there is teaching to be done, and this would specially interest those girls, who, having left school, still go on with their education. There are pupil teachers to be read with, and elder girls to instruct.

The pupil teachers, in little groups belonging to each school, varying from three to ten in number, could be invited after their work is over, once a week for an hour or so, to read books such as Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies," or Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus," to learn French, or to be initiated into the mysteries of the microscope. The routine work of a pupil teacher is in itself dull, hard, and apt to crush out originality, but it is really they who hold the future of the working classes in their hands; and to elevate the hopes, widen the interests, and raise the standard of our people's teachers is surely no mean task to offer

to girls waiting to be helpful. The elder girls, too, repay teaching in extra and outside subjects, and it can be given at noon, if the teacher can make her lesson attractive enough to compete with the play hour, not an impossible feat, so eagerly do children devour news about their bodies, scientific cookery, and star-gazing stories; or it can be carried on in club rooms and night schools. The former, perhaps, opens out the largest field for varied accomplishments, ranging as it does from stocking-mending and hat-trimming to letter writing and Bible philosophy.

But I will not weary you with more details. The things I have suggested may seem unimportant; they are not really so in their results. The young seedling is helped by many influences, some of them apparently insignificant, before it grows straight, and the girl who will give her time to forming some of the influencing surroundings of her younger and but little known relations, need not be surprised if in after life she finds such work blessed in the way she least expects but perhaps would most value—namely, in preventing vice and serving as barriers against impurity.

Help-willing girls will know that they can help. Hand-work, head-work, heart-work, all are in demand if given simply and unaffectedly. Mothers will know that there is work which their girls can do without running unwise risks, work which will give their children a greater right to the enjoyment which they so lavishly (and rightly so) provide for them, work which, apart from the satisfaction and fulness that comes by it into their own personal lives, will make them more able to call themselves followers of Him who has said, "I am among you as one who serves."

A KING'S DAUGHTER.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO, Author of "Her Object in Life," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVII. ASPIRATIONS.

MARGARET STEWART was not mistaken. Lord Fowles had really come to Shetland in his friend's yacht. When her telegram had reached Fowles its master had been staying there, having left his vessel at the nearest seaport—that at which May Castle had spent the lonely first holiday of her life. He had put it instantly at the marquis's service, being himself a good-hearted, enthusiastic youth, and only too glad to make his love of adventure and variety do service to the wishes or needs of his friends. Fleet horses had been swiftly in readiness to bear them to the coast. Loyal service, large resource, and favouring winds had out-run the giants of rail and steam; for by their utmost aid—it being, of course, interrupted by the exigencies of public service—Mr. Stewart himself could not reach Balaclava for some hours later.

When, by the help of William Thomson's glass, Margaret saw the marquis spring on shore, she turned and went back to her house. It occurred to her at once that Lord Fowles would do exactly what he did—namely, go up to the manse before coming to Balaclava. He would spare her from reciting such details as he could hear equally well from the good old minister.

But in less than an hour afterwards he stood with her beside her mother's coffin. Lord Fowles was deeply touched.

In his earlier visits to the island he had learned to know and love Mrs. Stewart. She had stirred the chord of his love for his own mother dead in her young widowhood. He had thought that if she had lived she would have been an elderly lady like this; he had even fancied some resemblance between her and Mrs. Stewart (Margaret knew how frequently people had said to her that her mamma reminded them of their mother, or grandmother, or aunt, or whatever relative or friend was the saint of their life-calendar, and she knew what a tribute this was, though in some cases it had been hard to suppress a smile at the bare thought of any possible resemblance); and now Lord Fowles's new regret for the sweet woman on whose calm dead face he gazed, touched to the quick the life-long sense of loss his mother's departure had left upon him. It always must be so. Every new joy or pain opens the accounts thereof already set down in our histories, that the new item may be added thereto. Those who have wept for their own dead weep for them again whenever sorrow, however remote, stirs the waters of life about them. We do not forget aught which has once really entered our lives. In the clinging loyalty of love we are apt to start and shrink when we hear our own first laughter, or first realise "a thoroughly happy time," after some great change or loss. We need not.

Pain changes into wisdom, sorrow into tenderness, wild yearning into tranquil hope, but they never cease to be, any more than a seed ceases to be when it grows into plant and flower. There are chords in our soul, motionless before, which now respond to any touch. There are many sides of truth in the simple verses of a sweet thinker of our own day:—

"The waters are rising and flowing
Over the weedy stone—
Over it, over it going:
It is never gone.
So joy after joy may go sweeping
Over the ancient pain:
Drowned in waves and waves of
weeping—
It will rise again."

"Well, I think she would have trusted me to take care of you. You will have all my life's love; but where hers was, Margaret, you will always feel a blank." So spoke Lord Fowles, as he led Margaret from her mother's coffin.

Margaret looked up at him quickly. He did not quite understand her glance.

"I do wish I had written to her very self about you," he said. "I only delayed because I meant to come down so soon. I spoke to your father, Margaret, before he left Fowles. I asked him if I might come here to speak to him about you. He said I might. He was not to mention it to you till I came."

Certainly, Margaret thought to herself,