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"The King's business requires haste."

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A TALE FOR THE TIMES.

BY TEN ALCOTT.

*To preserve continuity, three Leaflets are consolidated.

An Idyl from
London Town

With an Epistle
by
Ten Alcott

*"And when ye come into an house, salute it,
and if the house be worthy, let your peace come
upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace
return to you. . . . Behold I send you forth
as sheep in the midst of wolves."*

Matt. x. 12-16.

The Daughter of an Earl

An Idyl from London Town

By Ten Alcott

"Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you,
but an old commandment, which ye had from the
beginning."—I. John ii. 7.



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This Idyl
if
Lovingly Dedicated
to
Muriel

*"All that are with me salute thee. Greet them
that love us in the faith. Grace be with you
all. Amen."*

Paul to Titus, iii. 15.

L'Envoyé

Go forth!

Though but one hear!

Create one smile,

Remove one fear,

Give but one mortal courage true,

Some meed of thanks is due.

No matter what the critics' pen

Shall score, with acrid acumen,

Against thy style,

With moral clear,

Thy dole of praise,

May drop, sincere,

Some of these days,

On Earth's hard ways,

A Tear!

What are we to do with the queer questions often put by untaught childhood? Of course they should be met at once with truth, and in the present instance the Earl's Daughter answered with perfect tact. The question really bordered upon verities, and where it trespassed it was certainly in innocence; for the child knew by intuition that there must have been some relationship between his benefactor and the One to whom he prayed, the which if he inverted 't was from a pardonable lack of experience and instruction.

Epistolary Introduction

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. . . . I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. . . . Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

I. John, ii. 1, 12, 13; v. 21.

Epistolary Introduction

THE BY-WAY, HEDGED IN,
EPIPHANY SEASON, 1894.

DEARLY BELOVED :

The following little Poem is founded upon the actual facts of so touching an occurrence, that its crystalization is fully justified. It has been dressed in contrasts simply that the Moral may shine out more clearly.

It was written years ago, and has awaited publication ever since—for just such "*times*" as these!

Indeed, it is a tale befitting such a day as ours, when, though there be no need of Poverty in such "a land of milk and honey" as we have inherited from Saxon ancestors, *yet none the less it stares us in the face!* My countrymen, there is but one way, and that is God's way, to settle

*"And he said, Thou canst not see my face:
for there shall no man see me and live. . . .
But my face shall not be seen."*

Ex. xxxiii. 20, 23.

*"Take heed that ye despise not one of these
little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven
their angels do always behold the face of my
Father which is in heaven."*

Matt. xviii. 10.

this matter. Settle it not, then He will settle it! and woe! unto the Land from which a seven-fold debt is to be mulcted to the final farthing!

The child's question, with which it culminates, is so natural, and withal so profound, in the simplicity of its innocent wonderment, that we maturer ones—sad elders in the dure experience of Life, and yet who are elsewhere told that, none the less, we "*are* all gods,"—cannot but commend that sympathetic trait of tenderness, in the Earl's Daughter, which, not forbearing to answer it with its necessary "No," yet took occasion to clothe her reply with sweetest truth, and to seal it in an angel's kiss.

Though it be true, "no *man* can meet God's glance and live," yet is it equally so, that "the *angels*" of men's *little ones*, unharmed, "behold their Heavenly Father's face." Full soon enough they lose this privilege! But woe to him who so offendeth, by his word or deeds, one of these Cherubs, that its right to dwell among the Seraphim is, as it were, perforce withdrawn!

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

Matt. x. 42.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke xii. 6, 7.

"Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?"

Luke xii. 24.

And then, how beautiful their Trust! while still, as yet, they are untaught at other knees than those maternal ones whereat they learn to lisp the Prayer of Prayers! And how must we, once pure as they, strive backward through the Needle's Eye to regain such a Trust, if thus alone we may attain the sky!

To give one but a "cup of water" is a blessed deed; to wash their little feet from stains of contact with the mire, but follows from the Master's creed—and His example! But when we turn aside to clothe one, the gain is a Beatitude—for angels thus may entertain each other unawares!

These little ones are, verily, of far more value than are many sparrows. Nor do they ever fall without their Father's deep solicitude—not even do the *ravens* lack for food, "when their young ones cry to God!" If we have ears to hear, and faith to comprehend, that, round about us there can be no such thing as accident, then daily may we see *how* God doth feed, in his own

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest?"

John x. 34-36.

"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

Luke xviii. 8.

time and way, all such as hunger, and clothe those who need.

That not a few of the Daughters of Israel, to whom this little tale shall come (and who, in the sense employed by Him "unto whom the word of God came," can indeed be veritable Mothers of a Race of gods), will so take it to their hearts, that they may educate, at least, "this generation"—in that Faith, which is so likely to be wanting when the Saviour reappears, is need enough for him, who feelingly relates it.

In the meanwhile, the duty of each "good and faithful servant," living in the Blessed Hope, and loving His Appearing, is too plain to need more than the reminder which is conveyed in the Moral of the tale itself. For to "occupy" until He comes, is to "Go and do likewise," in whatsoever the hand findeth to do, and the heart to approve.

TEN ALCOTT.

OFF THE THOROUGHFARE,
JAN. 9, 1894.

"Not one of them is forgotten before God."

Luke xii. 6.

*"The sparrow hath found a house, . . .
even thy altars, O Lord of Hosts."*

Psalm lxxxiv. 3.

*"Thou hast given us Thine own Son, and wilt
thou not give us bread?"*

* * * *

An Idyl from
London Town

"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency, in all things may abound to every good work."

II. Corinth. ix. 6-8.

The Daughter of an Earl

An Idyl from
London Town

*The sparrows, though by Him wind tossed,
Who doeth all things well,
Are counted, lest for one that's lost,
There be a hopeless knell.*

*'Twas bitter night in London Town, the Times
were dull, the Stocks were down. The poor
grew poorer, while the rich, made contrast hate-
ful, from the ditch.*

*But little work could be obtained, and this the
merest pittance gained. Disjointed times, and
discontent, but sharpness to this picture lent.*

"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side."

Luke x. 30-32.

The snow swept fiercely down the street, the crowd pressed on with hurrying feet, the very "strikers" struck for home! Harsh winter's boycott bade none roam!

E'en Charity, quite scant'ly clad, crossed far below, nor saw a lad, who, shiv'ring by a shop's light front, stood shoeless in the storm's rude brunt.

Of Poverty's despairing plight, he formed a pitiable sight. His clothes together scarce could hold; the boy was barely six years old.

But contrasts are so common now, in Christian lands, with shame I trow, that few perceive a mute appeal that erst-times touched Samaria's zeal.

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God."

Luke xii. 16-21.

*The light within the shop was bright, and
clove the darkness of the night. His wistful
gaze was cast within—'Twas Heaven! as
viewed from Hell's dark gin!*

*Thus through the gates of Paradise, Eve's
children gaze in sad surmise, and picture Life's
most dismal text, whose Moral has all ages
vext.*

*He was too young to join the race, and
wot not that upon his face, his very soul rose
pictured plain, against the French-glass window-
pane.*

*But One that answereth Prayer had heard,
and of His messengers had stirred, an Angel
from her own warm nest, to compass blindly
His behest.*

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Matt. x. 6-8.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Matt. vii. 12.

*A Daughter fair of England's Earl, in
raiment rare, and costly pearl, alighted from
her stately coach, before the rich shop's lofty
porch.*

*She was her father's favorite child; young,
pure and graceful; sweet and mild; The
World, as yet, had stood aloof; against its
guile her heart was proof.*

*But passing in, her glance, dismayed, caught
sight of Want, so bare displayed! It needed
naught, save sight alone, to tell that tale, too
mute to moan!*

*Why, pray, should Want, with naked leg,
waste WORDS with passers-by to beg? Hath
not the eye an equal ken, O toilers among
fellow men?*

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him."

Luke x. 33, 34.

*Yea! such as she are sighted keen, or ken
from insight; for I ween, Christ's Self looks
through some human souls; All hearts are
not possessed with ghouls!*

*The vision prompted her to act. She did it
with a woman's tact. His hand ingathering
into hers:—*

*"Come hither, little one, with me,"—With
trust his heart responsive stirs—*

*"In warmth within thou'lt better see;" she
said, as, winning his consent, above him she a
moment bent.*

*Implicitly the child obeyed. Simplicity for
naught delayed. And so the twain passed in
the door. The richness filled the lad with
awe!*

"Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

Heb. xiii. 1, 2.

"And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

Mark ix. 36, 37.

"Where is thy home?"

"I have none, Ma'am, 'tis cold to roam!"

*The poison'd dram had swept its besom
through his pale of penury, where life began!*

*An orphan, he had heard the wail his
mother, dying, left on earth—his sole inheri-
tance of dearth!*

*To lift the Veil from such a tale would
pain my pen, to no avail; but surely, Reader,
thou hast seen, the sere succeed the ever-green—
perchance hast Neighbors, left by thieves, to
succor whom the Saviour grieves!*

*It was a strange scene in the glare, that
threw the contrasts of the pair into a bold
relief; though indescribably they blent, by means
of tones that Virtue lent.*

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

Matt. vi. 7-13.

*The clerks, obsequious, checked their glance;
the purchasers looked 'round askance; while,
innocent of Fashion's whirl, stooped down that
Daughter of an Earl.*

*"O Saviour!" in her heart, she said, "No
wonder Thou for men hast bled!"*

*Then, turning to a clerk near by, she said
aloud, with moisten'd eye:*

*"Bring me some stockings, soft and warm,
with which to clothe this little form; and
water, in a basin, please"—she uttered this
upon her knees.*

*And when 'twas placed at her command,
she bathed his feet with jewelled hand, and
wiped them, with the napkin lent, as though to
bless the Sacrament.*

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Matt. xix. 24; Mark x. 25.

"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

Luke x. 35.

"And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly upon him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

Acts vi. 15.

*Her sisters, shocked, with scornful smile,
viewed this aghast, far down the aisle ; then
turned, and hastened from the scene of what
did but their pride demean.*

*And yet, withal, it softened some, before whom
such a sight had come. For we amid exam-
ples move, that strive life's sorest ills to
soothe.*

*Rejecting all the rags she loathed, with all
he needed he was clothed. 'Twas almost as if
born anew. Ne'er brighter flower was decked
with dew.*

*The deed thus o'er, she blessed the lad, who
stood before her warmly clad, and bade him
go, with promise plain, that he should hear
from her again.*

*"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple
named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called
Dorcas" [the gentle Doe-Capreolur dorcas]:
"this woman was full of good works and alms-
deeds which she did."*

Acts ix. 36.

*Then, somewhat dazed, her wants forgot, in
contemplating life's hard lot, she, also, turned
to leave the store, resolved the morrow to do
more.*

*But awe the little boy delayed, still with her
garment's hem he played, while o'er his face
an angel strayed!*

*So, judging that he wished to say, some sim-
ple thanks, ere sent away, she paused, as Spring
doth ent'ring May.*

*"What art thou thinking, little child?" she
sweetly asked, and winning smiled! His silence,
thus, she quick beguiled.*

"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

Matt. xviii. 2-5.

"When you came by, outside the door, I prayed, as Mamma taught me, for I asked God if He'd give me shoes; I think you hear the words I use!"—

*Replied the child, now newly shod;—
"Are you the mamma, Ma'am, to God?"*

*She veiled her face; the crimson rush'd
from heart twice touched; for Pity blushed
to find the place so wondrous hush'd!*

*She had to wreck his dream by "No!"
But added: "God had heard his prayer,
and sent one of his DAUGHTERS there!"*

*Then did she kiss the child, and go, whose
Innocence had thanked her so. Yet who shall
say, but in disguise, THE PRINCE had not
looked in her eyes?"*

"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

Matt. xviii. 14.

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

I. John ii. 28.

*At any rate, I say to thee, wherever men
and women be, this tale of Mercy should be
told, until the World, itself, is old.*

*Who, pray, shall all of Life unseal ; its deep
Philosophy reveal ! Full many have with Angels
met, who do not know the secret yet !*

*For instance : in the tale just told, which,
to the other, had God sent ? Which is the
ANGEL really meant ?*

*'Tis God's, this riddle, to unfold, its answer
doth deep secret hold !*

*And, lest one solve it, ere its day, the char-
acters still with us stay. For they, too, are
among the "signs" for us to read between the
lines !*

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Esther iv. 14.

*The lad has come to man's estate — a
"Keeper" of "The Narrow Gate." In peace-
ful battle doth he wage, his aim—'tis sorrow
to assuage.*

*While she, with silver-threaded curl, is
sweeter than a lovely girl.*

*May Heaven, this Daughter of an Earl,
receive with lifted Gates of Pearl!*

Moral.

*Oh Daughters! filled with Saxon grace, ye
all are sprung from Earl-King Race; pause
sometimes, as through life ye go, and from
abundance some bestow upon the poor, the cold,
the sair, who, needy, crowd Life's Thoroughfare.*

*The "least" of them are "son's of God!"
Help them to Pass beneath His Rod!*

TEN ALCOTT.

"Go, and do THOU likewise!"

Luke x. 37.

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