

Mrs. M. S. Thompson

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### POETRY.

Little Boy Blue. BY A. D. T. WHITNEY.

Of morals in novels, we've had not a few With, now and then, novel moralities; And we've weekly exhorting from pulpit to pew; But it strikes me—and so it may chance to strike you—

—Another Goose for Grown Folks.

### Miscellany.

The Two Servants, OR, RIGHT-HAND AND LEFT-HAND.

'Good-morning,' said Chrystal to Bubble, as, each attended by his two servants, they met on the bank of the river. 'How have you enjoyed your self lately? Does everything go well?'

'Capitally!' replied Bubble. 'I spend my days in a perfect round of pleasure. Isn't it a great thing to have such a powerful friend as Mammon? He gave me a pot of gold only yesterday, and every little yellow coin means a new delight. Have you seen him lately? I hear that he is equally generous with you.'

'It is true,' said Chrystal; 'he has given me a pint of diamonds this very morning; and I suppose I can buy anything in the world. There is nothing that I need deny myself. And yet I do not feel quite easy.'

Chrystal hesitated, 'it seems sometimes as if we ought to be thinking about—as if we ought to be doing something about—'

'Those building-blocks,' interrupted Bubble, shrugging his shoulders. 'That is just what Right-hand has been harping about all the morning. Do you know the fellow had the impudence to tell me, Bubble, lowered his voice, 'that it was wrong to be thinking so much of my own pleasure; that it was no matter whether I was happy or not; that my only business here—for the little time that I stay—was to get together building material for a house in the Golden City.'

'Did he say how you were to do this?' asked Chrystal.

'Yes. He said that every time we did a good deed, there would be a building-block laid at our door. This would be carried by special messengers to our great Friend in the Golden City, who would build it—in case there was no flaw in the stone—into a house that would be ready for us when we came.'

'Exactly what my Right-hand said to me,' said Chrystal, thoughtfully. 'He must be true; and I have never yet found one building-block at my door.' He looked yearningly away to the east, where could be dimly seen the golden spires of the lovely city, with towers from which floated banners of crimson and blue.

'I am sure I wish it wasn't true,' fretted Bubble. 'I don't want to go to any better land than this. I should like to stay here always.'

'Chrystal sighed. 'You don't like your servants very much, then?' said he, by way of changing the subject. 'Oh, Left-hand is a very clever fellow,' said Bubble. 'There have been some bad stories about him; as, for instance, that he was born down in Shadow Land, just beyond the Black Forest.'

Here Chrystal and Bubble both looked down the river and slivered a little; it was so dark, and gloomy in that direction, and the clouds took such threatening shapes.

'But, hush!' said Bubble, 'don't let the poor fellow hear; he is very sensitive about it; nothing hurts his feelings so much. And he is such a delightful fellow, after all, with the sweetest voice in the world; I love to listen to him. Now, Right-hand, the prig, is so tiresome. It is always, you ought, and you ought, and you ought. One never can have any peace.'

'But they say he was born in the Golden City, and was sent to us by the Friend,' said Chrystal. 'If that is true, everything he says must be

right. And have you never heard that there is a great enemy in the Shadow Land, who probably sent Left-hand?'

'Stuff and nonsense!' cried Bubble, impatiently. 'Do you know I have my doubts whether there is any such land at all. See, it is all cloud and mist,' he looked down the river again. 'You can make nothing out clearly.'

'But they say,' persisted Chrystal, 'that by and by, when we are called to get into the boats, and go away from this shore, our future home will quite depend upon which of our two servants is the stronger. If Right-hand is strong and hearty, he will take the oar, and row us, swiftly away through the door of the sun, into the Golden City. But if we have indulged Left-hand too much, and he is overgrown, he will seize the boat's head and turn it down, down to the mist and darkness that he loves.'

'My dear Chrystal, what gloomy nonsense! I should become quite nervous if I listened to you. Come, let us take a look at my new span of horses.'

'Excuse me,' said Chrystal, 'but I believe this is the day for a special message from our Friend. I heard there was a bulletin, and I was going to see if it might not be something to help me, to tell me the best use for my diamonds.'

'I will go with you,' said Bubble, reluctantly.

And when they reached the office, there was the message in large, plain characters. Chrystal read it: 'Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fall, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.'

'And what can that mean?' said Bubble.

Right-hand tried to answer, but Left-hand laid the louder voice. 'It means, sir, that you must give presents, and great dinner-parties to all the rich people you know, and then they will admire and honor you, and you will always be sure of plenty of friends, who will welcome you into their beautiful houses.'

'That seems reasonable,' said Bubble, 'and a very pleasant thing to do. I will take your advice, my good Left-hand.'

'What does that mean?' said Chrystal, also, to his two servants. They both began at once.

'I will hear Right-hand, first,' said Chrystal.

'It means, Master Chrystal, that you must not spend all these gifts of Mammon on yourself—on things that are only of use on this side of the river; but you must feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and so you will make a great many friends, some of whom, going over before you, will help carry your building-blocks. They will also be waiting at the gates to welcome you when you come, and to show you joyfully the beautiful house which has been built for you.'

'That is very sweet,' said Chrystal, his face all aglow.

'Master, hear me,' began Left-hand, who had turned very pale.

'No. I am satisfied,' said Chrystal. 'Right-hand, I shall take your advice.'

Just one year later, Chrystal and Bubble again met on the bank of the river. Bubble, elegantly dressed, came dashing along in a grand carriage, his two servants sitting behind him. Chrystal was on foot, arm-in-arm with Right-hand, with whom he was earnestly talking. Left-hand walked just behind, listening with all his might, but looking tired and discouraged.

well. Ah, my poor, ruined blocks! 'What, the building-blocks? Are you really at work on them?' laughed Bubble. 'Well, what has gone wrong?'

'I found out only yesterday,' said Chrystal, sadly, 'that as soon as my stones were brought into the clear air of the Golden City, they began to crumble and fall to pieces. There was some dreadful flaw. And what that was, I have just found out by the message on the bulletin-board this morning.'

'Can you remember it?' asked Bubble.

Chrystal nodded, and repeated slowly, 'Take heed that ye do not your aims before men, to be seen of them: otherwise—'

'Yes, yes,' interrupted Bubble, 'I see. Otherwise the stones are good for nothing the other side of the river. Yes, I suppose that doing good for the sake of the praise of men does injure the stones a little. But why not be philosophical; they need not be entirely lost; they still make a very fair show on this side. I have been giving a great deal myself, lately, as my good Left-hand says it looks respectable, and pays on the whole; and I have built two or three monuments which please me very much. Some time, when I am older, I will try to make a better class of stone, which will do to end over. In the meanwhile, I think I am much the happier of us two.'

'But your Right-hand looks miserably thin,' said Chrystal. 'I should be afraid—'

'He is stout and hearty compared to your Left-hand,' retorted Bubble. 'I do not believe you feed him properly.'

'Better than he deserves,' said Chrystal. 'I am intending to put him on a much stricter diet.'

'We will see about that,' said Left-hand, with a bitter smile. 'I also have my plans. We shall see if Right-hand is always going to be pampered, while I am starved.'

Another year passed, and Chrystal, walking on the bank of the river, saw Bubble dash by, without recognizing him. It was not much wonder for he was dressed very shabbily, having doled himself everything that he might support two or three families riden by a fire. And this he had done so very quietly that nobody had the least suspicion of it.

Bubble, on the contrary, was heading along train of carriages in which were all the principal people of the city, and he was going to superintend the opening of the Bubble Orphan Asylum.

'Yes, that is the great Bubble,' the people said on every side. 'He gives away like a prince. Ah, he is laying out treasure in the Golden City.' Then they would lower their voices, 'Such a pity about Chrystal. He no longer clothes himself decently; and for all that he hasn't a penny for the poor. What is so pitiful as a wiser?'

And Chrystal's heart swelled with pride and pleasure.

'How few are willing to be so misunderstood,' whispered sly Left-hand. 'How little they know.'

'Yes,' said Chrystal, complacently, 'there certainly has been some improvement since last year. I give away thousands, and not a soul suspects it. Nothing that Right-hand has done lately, has been seen of men. I have taken the greatest pains.'

'And he has done so much, too! it is wonderful! Master, let us tell over some of the good deeds, and count them.'

So Chrystal most willingly began, and every other word the cunning Left-hand would break in with 'Grand!' 'Noble!' 'Magnanimous!' 'What self-sacrifice!' 'There can be no doubt about the building stones now.'

'Master Chrystal,' said Right-hand, feebly, 'I am dying of love and grief. I love you so much, and I grieve to see you so deceived. Master, I must tell the truth; not one of those stones you have thought so perfect, has been fit to be used in the Golden City.'

Chrystal stood aghast. 'How can that be?' he asked, in a hollow tone. 'I have been so careful to keep them from flaws. Who has pried into my secrets?'

'You have told everything to Left-hand,' said Right-hand, sadly.

'And was that wrong?' asked poor Chrystal.

But Right-hand only said, 'There is something on the bulletin-board, master. If you take this glass you can read it from where you sit.'

Chrystal raised his heavy eyes, and read: 'But when thou doest alms, let not Left-hand know what Right-hand doeth.'

'You see, master,' said Right-hand, gently, 'first you did good works for the sake of the praise of others; and then for the praise of Left-hand; and this last ruined the stones more surely than the first.'

'What is Left-hand's name in the land where he was born?' said Chrystal, faintly.

'Ask him,' said Right-hand.

The next day two deeds were done that outwardly looked just alike, but in fact as different as light and darkness. The day was cold and stormy, and just as night was setting in, with a bitter wind, two old men, tattered, frozen and starving, came down the street, and one fell upon Bubble's door-step and one upon Chrystal's—for the houses were side by side.

'Dreadful,' cried Bubble, who was dressing for dinner, 'this is just my luck. Why couldn't he have fallen somewhere else? But there is that sharp-eyed Mrs. Micro Scope looking from her window. It will never do to let him lie there and die. I should never hear the last of it.'

And, greatly grumbling, he raised the old man, brought him in by the fire, chafed his cold hands and gave him a warm drink.

Chrystal also saw the old man upon his steps. He had been working hard all day and had just come home to rest; his bones were aching and his head seemed on fire.

'For the love of the Great Friend,' whispered Right-hand and the words acted like a charm.

Chrystal fairly ran to bring him in; he fed and warmed and clothed him as if he had been his own brother.

Left-hand bustled in just as all was over.

'What! another good work my saintly master?' he began briskly. 'What has the good Right-hand been doing now? Let me look from the window. Ah, what a wonderful white stone is lying at the door.'

'Where is Right-hand?' asked Chrystal.

'Oh, he's a troublesome fellow,' fretted Bubble. 'He fell in a swoon just as we were leaving the house. I am glad it wasn't Left-hand, who has always been so faithful and fond of me.'

'But, Bubble! my dearest Bubble, where are you going?' cried Chrystal in the greatest alarm, as he saw that Left-hand was turning the boat down the stream.

'I am sure I don't know,' said Bubble, beginning to weep. 'I wish I didn't have to go at all. It is so hard, Chrystal. I was just going to begin that right kind of stone this year. Now I have nothing over there. But I must try to trust Left-hand; he has always made me very comfortable here.'

'You do not know him,' cried Chrystal, wringing his hands. 'Miserable Left-hand, what is your true name in the land where you were born?'

Left-hand had thrown off all disguises now.

'Self!' he shouted back triumphantly. And away they swept under a heavy fold of mist.

'Chrystal!' cried a voice. And he turned to find Right-hand looking at him with such a beautiful significant smile that he forgot everything that was sad.

'Am I going to the Golden City? Can it be?' asked Chrystal eagerly.

Right-hand nodded, with another smile whose sweetness could never be told.

'Dearest friend!' cried Chrystal in a voice suffocated with joy. 'Tell me, what is your true name in the land where you were born?'

'Love!' answered Right-hand. 'I am of royal descent.' And immediately the air seemed filled with music and perfume.

'Ah, they are opening the gates,' murmured Right-hand.

And away, and away they floated into the lovely golden light.

Then all the people who had come down to the shore with all their servants to see Bubble and Chrystal go, turned to each other and said, 'This is a lesson for us. It is much better to do as Chrystal has done. Let us all go home and kill our Left-hands.'

And all the Left-hands shrugged their shoulders and said 'Weshallah.'

And when the last census was taken in the city they were ten Bubbles for every Chrystal.

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