

DISTANT THINGS.

O, white is the sail in the far away,
And dirty the sail at the dock;
And fair are the cliffs across the bay
And black is the near-by rock.

AN EASTER OFFERING.

BY ANNA SHIELDS.



SUSIE BARCLAY sat in her room stitching busily,
and at the same time building air-castles,
the innocent air-castles of a girl of
eighteen, who is just waking to
the consciousness of a heart to be
won and given.

The Rev. James Castleton was a
quiet, rather reserved man of thirty-
five, not handsome, not especially
gifted with eloquence. But in his soft
gray eyes, in the curves of his gravely
set mouth lay an expression of goodness,
of unostentatious, true piety,
that made his simple language more
effective than the most elaborate oratory.

He had shown an interest in Susie
Barclay for many reasons. She was
an orphan and had lost both parents
and a sister within a fortnight, victims
of a malignant fever raging in
Rosedale, four years before. She was
poor, having taken a position as household
teacher in a seminary, and been
consoled drudge as well, to earn an
education. At the time Mr. Castleton
came to Rosedale, Susie was teaching
music, was organist at St. Mark's, and
in leisure time at home earned many
an odd dollar by embroidery.

And it was upon embroidery she was
busy on the week preceding Easter—
Mr. Castleton's first Easter in Rosedale.
As organist, Susie was com-
pelled to take part in all the services
at St. Mark's, but beside this regular
attendance, she was a devout, sincere
member of the church, and gave her
time, little as she could spare it, to
the work in the missionary society,
sewing circles and festivals of the
year.

And the work upon which she was
sewing so steadily Susie called, in her
heart, her Easter offering. Mrs.
Stacey, often employed Susie's busy
fingers, and it only made the gentle girl
smile scornfully when she heard Bessie
Stacey praised for the exquisite
embroidery her own active fingers
wrought.

Mrs. Stacey intended to make an
Easter offering, at St. Mark's, of a
new set of church linen, and she had
engaged Susie to hemstitch and em-
broider it, promising her ten dollars
for work she well knew would cost her
three times that sum in any city store.

And Susie had already appropriated
that sum, in her mind. She would
buy a large cross of white flowers,
such as she had seen in her visits to
the city, and present it to St. Mark's.
Not one penny of those ten dollars
would she use for her own expenses;
and if Bessie Stacey let it be under-
stood that she had embroidered the
linen her mother presented, why,
Susie could give her cross, and so
balance matters.

For, somewhere in the depths of her
heart, so far down she had never
called it to the surface, Susie knew
that there was rivalry between Bessie
Stacey and herself. She knew that
Mr. Castleton was frequently at Mrs.
Stacey's, to luncheon, to dinner, to
arrange various church matters in
which Mrs. Stacey suddenly awakened
to an interest she had never felt when
good old Mr. Murray presided in the
pulpit.

As she worked in the passion-flowers
encircling her cross, Susie thought of
the order she would send to her Aunt
Mary in the city for the cross she
meant to buy. She had steadily put
away the temptation to buy a new
spring hat or one new dress, resolving
to make over her gray poplin once
more and have her old hat cleaned
and pressed. And, really, one must
be eighteen, with a very limited,
hard-earned wardrobe and a strong
desire to appear attractive in the eyes
of one person, to appreciate the sacrifice
Susie was making. Ten dollars,
with her economical habits, her skill
in sewing, would go far toward
girlish adornment!

But it was to be her Easter offering;
and if there lurked a thought of Mr.
Castleton's words of praise or his grave
eyes looking approvingly upon her
tasteful gift, was she so very much
to blame?

She had finished her work before
sunset, and took it home. Mrs.
Stacey was in the sitting room, where
Bessie was opening the parcel containing
a new silk suit for Easter Sunday, and
Susie was called upon to admire the
color, the style, the general effect.

"It is dark for spring," Bessie said,
frolicfully.

"You know very well you cannot
bear light colors," said her mother.
"Your eyes and hair are all you can
desire; your teeth are good, your fea-
tures regular and your figure is simply
perfect; but your complexion is thick
and sallow, and always will be until
you stop eating such rich food. Now,
here is Susie without one really good
feature in her face, with an insignifi-
cant figure, eyes of no color in particu-
lar, a sort of bluish-gray, but with a
complexion like a miniature painting.
She can wear blue and softly tinted
fabrics, but you cannot."

She might have added that Susie's
hair was the color of corn-silk and one
mass of golden waves and soft ringlets;
that Susie's mouth was like a
baby's in its tender curves and sweet
expression; that Susie's eyes were full
of intelligence and gentle, womanly
sweetness; but she forgot to mention
these points, and Susie was crushed,
as she intended her to be, in spite of
her complexion.

But Mrs. Stacey took out her pocket-
book and from it a ten-dollar gold-
piece.

"You can buy a new hat," she said,
in a patronizing way indescribably ir-
ritating.

"No," Susie said, quietly; "this is
to be my Easter offering."

"Oh! And speaking of Easter,
would you mind, on your way home,
taking this linen to Mrs. Byrne's to
wash and iron. Tell her I must have
it on Friday at the very latest!"

It was growing dark, and Susie re-
membered that so far from being "on
her way home," Mrs. Byrne lived at
the other end of Rosedale, but she
was to shy too refuse, and rolled the
linen up again.

Mrs. By. was a hard-worked
woman with seven sons. Her
husband, after subjecting her to all
the miseries of a drunkard's wife, had
released her by pitching head-first off
the bridge below Rosedale, into the
river. Womanlike, she grieved for
him, as if he had made her life a bed
of roses, and turned to her wash-tubs
for a living, patiently and industri-
ously. A very sunbeam of a woman
she was, in spite of her troubles, and
Susie was amazed to find her sitting on
the d door-steps sobbing like a child.

She rose to receive Mrs. Stacey's
message, and promised to do the
work, and then, in answer to Susie's
gentle, "You are in trouble, I am
afraid," her grief broke out in words.

"I've no right to complain, miss,"
she said, "for the Lord 's been very
good to us since poor Tim was
drowned, but indeed it's a chance
lost I'm fretting for."

"A chance lost?" said Susie, her
voice still full of gentle sympathy.

"It's Nora, miss. She's been deli-
cate, miss, ever since she was born,
and the air here is bad for her in-
tensely. The doctor says her lungs is
wax, and it's a bad cough she's got,
and we're too near the say here in
Rosedale. And me sister, who lives at
B., she's wrote she'll take Nora for
her own, an' give her schooling and
not let her work till she's stronger.
She's not much of her own, hasn't
sister Mary; but she's no childer since
she put four in the church-yard, and
she'll be good to Nora, an' the child
just dying here by inches, for she will
help me, an' stoppin' in the washin'
bad for her. She coughs that bad at
night, miss, and the doctor says the
air in B.—would be the makin' of her."

"But, surely, you will send her,"
said Susie.

"There it is, miss! Mary, she can't
send money out an' out, and it costs
six dollars to go to B.— I was up to
Mrs. Stacey's, to ax the loan of it,
and work it out a little at a time on the
washin'; but she told me she could not
spare it. An' she rich! I'm thinkin',
miss, perhaps she'd be servin' the Lord
as well as savin' a girl's life, you may
say, instead of buyin' all this embroid-
ered linen to show off at St. Mark's."

The words struck Susie like a stab.
Was it to serve the Lord or for her
own vanity she wanted to give the
white cross to St. Mark's? Saving a
human life! The thought almost took
her breath.

"You can send Nora if you have ten
dollars?" she asked.

"You seem surprised at something,
Mrs. Byrne," said a quiet, deep voice
at her elbow, and she looked up to see
Mr. Castleton standing beside her. "I
came over to see if you could come up
to the parsonage and help Mrs. Willis
to-morrow. She has some extra work
on hand."

"Yes, sir! I'll come, and be thank-
ful to you, An' I am surprised—just
dazed like," And out came the whole
story from the grateful woman's lips,
ending with:

"And it's workin' she is as hard as
meself in her own way, while Mrs.
Stacey, that's rollin' in money couldn't
spare just the loan of it, for it's not
begging I'd be!"

Easter services were over, and Mrs.
Stacey had invited Mr. Castleton to
dinner. She had told no direct lie,
but certainly had given the impression
that the lovely embroidery upon the
new linen was the work of Bessie's
fingers. As they drove home, she asked
Mr. Castleton sweetly.

"Don't think me impertinent, but
which of the offerings was Miss Bar-
clay's?"

"None that I know of."

"Was there one offering of ten dol-
lars in the collection?"

"No—a five-dollar bill was the larg-
est."

"Such hypocrisy!" sneered Bessie.
"It was not necessary for Miss Barclay
to tell you, mamma, she was going to
give ten dollars for an Easter offering,
but she need not have told a falsehood
about it!"

"Nor did she," said Mr. Castleton.
"Her Easter offering was ten dollars."

But he made no further explana-
tion; nor did Susie, when summer
time brought her a letter, asking her
to share his life and labors, know
that Mrs. Byrne had told him the
story of her charity.—New York Led-
ger.

A Deadwood Lyching.

Leader Richardson gives, in the
New York Sun, the following vivid
description of the lynching of a murderer
at Deadwood in the seventies:

When the preparations were com-
plete the prisoner's hands were manacled
behind him, and he was led out-
side. The crowd cheered and then
hooped as they saw him. The yellow
of his skin had changed to an ashen
hue, and his one active little eye swept
the horizon with a venomous glitter.
But he did not wince. He clutched
his half-smoked weed convulsively with
his teeth, pulled himself together and
stood firmly on his feet, with his chin
elevated defiantly. He was lifted to
the back of the horse, and sitting there,
bolt upright, was led away across the
gulch to where a long rope dangled
from a limb of a gaunt dead tree. In
one end of this rope there was a running
noose. The other end, after passing
over the limb, was held by several men
further up the side of the gulch. The
horse was led under the tree, two
guards, with rifles ready, walking on
either side. The crowd moved on-
ward like an angry river, panting
with excitement that broke out in
curses and vile exclamations.

The noose was adjusted, the horse
was led out from under the murderer's
form, and at the same moment the men
holding the opposite end of the rope
ran up the hill with it for a few paces.
The body of the tall Missourian, writ-
ing horribly in agony, flew upward.
A dozen shots from pistols and rifles
rang sharply out. The malefactor's
ungainly feet, which had been drawn
up in the first contortion of suffering,
fell back. The body, which had
clung desperately at the back of his
shirt, relaxed and hung down, limp
and pulseless. The teeth, which had
been clenched in the final and supreme
effort of self-control, parted, and the
remnant of the last black cigar came
floating to the ground. The artificial
eye, now not more sightless than its
furtive companion, cast a coldly sinis-
ter stare out over the throng below,
a throng hushed with the spending of
its fury. The body, twisting with the
strain upon the rope, swayed to and
fro in the freshening breeze. The peo-
ple, who were sobered and reflective,
turned slowly away and dispersed.

The World Growing Better.

It may sound a little slangy, but the
popular expression, "we're getting
there," seems to fit the times exactly.
The world is growing better because
the people are better than they ever
were before. The sun may not shine
any brighter, but we appreciate the
light more highly. There may be as
dark places as ever there were, but we
are able to avoid them.

Certainly there never was a time
when gentleness and purity, human
love and human sympathy were more
respected or more generally appreci-
ated. Coarseness and vulgarity, rudeness
and riot will melt away before
these mild influences, until finally this
old world will be so bright and so
lovable that even the good will regret
having to leave it.

We are becoming more human,
which means that the savage in our
nature is being eliminated.—Pittsburg
Commercial Gazette.

A Studio Trick.

In the corner of an artist's studio in
this city is an ingenious arrangement
of screens, upon one of which, over an
aperture about the size of a face, is an
inscription: "Likenesses taken in-
stantaneously." The innocent visitor
peeks through the hole and is aston-
ished to behold an exact likeness of
himself as a hump-backed jester in a
scarlet coat, opening a prison door.
The secret of this effect is simple. The
jailer is a life-size painting strongly
rendered. The place for the face is
cut out and a mirror inserted, reflect-
ing the features of the spectator. The
conception of the amusing fantasy is
not entirely original. It was imported
from the studio of Wiertz, the
Belgian artist.—Philadelphia Record.

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUN-
DAY SERMON.

Subject: "From Conquest to Con-
quest."

TEXT: "Behold the days come, saith the
Lord, that the plowman shall overtake
the reaper."—Amos ix., 13.

Picture of a tropical climate, with a
season so prosperous that the harvest reaches
over to the planting time, and the swarthy
husbandman swinging the sickle in the
black grain almost feels the breath of the
horrible plow, the horses hitched to
the plow preparing for a new crop. "Behold
the days come, saith the Lord, that the
plowman shall overtake the reaper. When
is that to be? To-day? To-morrow? No,
when hardly have you done reaping and
before the plowman is getting ready for
another.

I know that many declare that Christianity
has collapsed; that the Bible is an obsolete
book; that the Christian church is of the
past. I will here and now show that
the opposite of that is true.

An Arab guide was leading a French
infantry across a desert, and ever and anon
the Arab guide would get down in the sand
and pray to the Lord. It disgusted the
French infanteries, and after awhile the Arab
got up from one of his prayers, the infan-
try said: "How do you know there is any
God?" and the Arab guide said: "How do
I know that a man and a camel passed
along our track last night? I know it by
the footprints in the sand. And you want
to know whether there is any God? Look at
that sunset. Is that the footstep of a man?"
And by the same process you and I have
come to understand that this book is the
footstep of a God.

But now let us see whether the Bible is
a last year's almanac. Let us see whether
the church of God is in a Bull Run retreat,
muskets, canteens and haversacks strowed
all the way. The great English historian,
Sharon Turner, a man of vast learning
and of great accuracy, not a clergyman, but
an avowed agnostic, as a historian, gives this
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century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the sixteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the seventeenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the eighteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the nineteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the twentieth
century, 30,000,000 Christians.

But now let us see whether the Bible is
a last year's almanac. Let us see whether
the church of God is in a Bull Run retreat,
muskets, canteens and haversacks strowed
all the way. The great English historian,
Sharon Turner, a man of vast learning
and of great accuracy, not a clergyman, but
an avowed agnostic, as a historian, gives this
everlasting statement, in regard to Chris-
tians in the different centuries: In the first
century, 500,000 Christians; in the second
century, 2,000,000 Christians; in the third
century, 5,000,000 Christians; in the fourth
century, 10,000,000 Christians; in the fifth
century, 15,000,000 Christians; in the sixth
century, 20,000,000 Christians; in the seventh
century, 24,000,000 Christians; in the eighth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the ninth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the tenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the eleventh
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the twelfth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the thirteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the fourteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the fifteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the sixteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the seventeenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the eighteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the nineteenth
century, 30,000,000 Christians; in the twentieth
century, 30,000,000 Christians.

tears raining down their cheeks. The whole
story is told.

You may talk about the church being a
collection of hypocrites, but when the diplo-
mats sweep your children off with them, do
you send for? The postmaster, the attorney-
general, the hotel-keeper, alderman? No;
you send for a minister of this Bible religion.
And if you have not a room in your house
for the obsequies, what building do you so-
licit? Do you say, "Give me the finest room
in the hotel?" Do you say, "Give me that
theatre?" Do you say, "Give me a place in
that public building, where I can lay my
dead for a little while until we say a prayer
over it?" No, you say, "Give us the house
of God."

And if there is a song to be sung at the
obsequies, what do you want? What does
anybody want? "The Marseillaise" hymn?
"God Save the Queen?" Our own grand
national air? No. They want the hymn
with which they sang their old Christian
mother into her last sleep, and which they
sang the Sabbath-school hymn which their
little girl sang the last Sabbath afternoon she
was out before she got that awful sickness
which broke your heart. I appeal to your common
sense. You know the most endearing in-
stitution on earth, the most endearing in-
stitution on earth to-day is the church of the
Lord Jesus Christ.

The infidels say, "Infidelity shows its suc-
cesses from the fact that it is everywhere
accepted, and it can say what it will." Why,
my friends, infidelity is not half so distant
in our days as it was in the days of our
fathers. Do you know that in the days of our
fathers, there were pronounced infidels in
public authority and they could set any
political position? Let a man to-day declare
himself antagonistic to the Christian reli-
gion, and what city would him for mayor?
What State would him for governor, what
nation would him for president or for king?
Let a man openly proclaim himself the
enemy of our glorious Christianity, and he
cannot get a majority of votes in any State,
in any city, in any county, in any ward of
America.

Do you think that such a scene could
be enacted now as was enacted in the days of
Robespierre, when a shameless woman was
elevated as a goddess and was carried a
golden chair to a cathedral, where she was
burned to her and people bowed, and
before her as a divine being, she taking the
place of the Bible and God Almighty, while
in the corridor of that cathedral were en-
acted such scenes of drunkenness and de-
bauchery and obscenity as has never been
witnessed? Do you believe that such a thing
could possibly occur in Christendom to-day?
No, sir! The police, whether of Paris or
New York, would swoop on it.