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A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

WHAT shall I give to thee, O Lord?

The scents that came of old
Laid softly on thy cradle rude
Their myrrh, and gems, and gold.

The martyrs gave their hearts' warm blood;
Their ashes strewed thy way;
They spurned their lives as dreams and dust,
To speed thy coming day.

We offer thee nor life nor death,
Our gifts to man we give;
Great Lord, upon thy day of birth,
Oh, what dost thou receive?

Thou knowest of sweet, precious things,
My store is scant and small;
Yet wert thou here in want and woe,
Lord, I would give thee all!

Show me thyself in flesh once more;
Thy feast I long to spread;
To bring the water for thy feet,
The ointment for thy head.

There came a voice from heavenly heights,
"Unclasp thine eyes and see,
Gifts to the least of those I love
Thou givest unto Me."

—Rose Terry Cooke.

CONFESSING A FRIEND.

"Oh, yes; of course! I'm not a heathen. I expect to live a Christian life and to do right, but then, I don't see any use in making all this public show about it. It is so much like saying, 'Behold, was ever righteousness like unto my righteousness?' I don't like any of those I-am-holier-than-thou professions."

That was what Florence George said, with a toss of her pretty head, when her Sabbath-school teacher referred to the recent baptism of one of the scholars in her class, and expressed the wish that Florence might also become a Christian.

The teacher looked deeply grieved, but she answered, very quietly, "I don't like such professions as that, either."

Florence had not expected so ready an assent to what she knew to be false reasoning (though she felt the difference implied in Miss White's accent), and felt called upon to justify her weak position.

"Well, Miss White, it does seem just like that," she said, with flushing face; "and I can be just as good a Christian outside the church as in it."

"Were you with the girls when they passed Dr. Hall on Broad Street, yesterday? I heard several of them talking of it to-day," was the unexpected question by which Florence thought her teacher changed the subject to those which she considered more congenial if not more urgent.

"Yes, ma'am, I was." And there came a swift look of defiance into the young face. "And he didn't recognize one of us. He was with a lady who would have answered for a walking fashion-plate, and I suppose didn't care to have her see him speaking to us, who dressed so much more plainly. But we'll all of us be even with him yet. He isn't so much better than we are, if he does happen to have a title to his name, and I declare, if the next time he speaks to me, I don't stare at him, and pretend I never saw him before. We're all going to do it, and it will serve him

exactly right. Don't you really think so, Miss White?"

"I would probably agree with you if I did not know that Dr. Hall is near-sighted, and really did not see one of you; he would not have been guilty of an actual slight from any such motive, to any lady friend; and, dear, your vindictiveness will hurt yourself much more than any one else, but your strong emotion on the subject will help you to understand a verse I would like to read here," replied Miss White, as she opened the Bible, and turned its pages rapidly. When she had found the place, Florence read, with burning cheeks:—

"Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven."



A JAPANESE STREET VENDER.

"It is not that Christ has any of that vindictive spirit which has made you so unhappy, but he cannot confess as his children those who have never confessed themselves to be his children. Think how it would be if one whom you loved very much indeed—loved so much that you were willing to sacrifice the dearest thing in life for him—were to pass you, knowingly, on the street, and refuse to claim your friendship. Wouldn't it hurt you—grieve you to the very heart?" she asked, very seriously.

"O Miss White! Do you suppose Christ really cares anything about it?" asked Florence.

"I don't suppose anything about it; I know. Unless we can be a true friend of another, and still refuse to acknowledge his friendship before others, we cannot be as good a Christian without confessing Christ as by doing so."

Florence looked troubled. "Indeed, Miss White, I always intended to do right, and, in a way, I thought I was a Christian; but now I see that I was all wrong. I will think it all over again."

"And I will pray for you, dear, while you are thinking," her teacher added.

Three weeks from that day, Florence followed her Lord's command of baptism, and on the day of this dedication and public confession, she said: "This is one command; I will follow all the others as well."
—Young Reaper.

WHATSOEVER a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

For the INSTRUCTOR. ROUND THE WORLD.—40.

THINGS JAPANESE.

STILL it is "Things Japanese," and if our readers are not weary, we will tell about salutations. They are novel, like everything else in Japan. Here we meet with the bow *par excellence*. Not the airy oscillation of the ultra-polite Frenchman, not the sweeping, graceful reverence of the Elizabethan period, but a unique conception of a bow. The Japs never shake hands, consequently this clue by which in the West we gain access to our neighbor's character is foreclosed. But they bow to the ground, sometimes two or three times, and it is not an unfrequent occurrence to see the host, when coming to admit a guest to his mansion, advancing on all fours. When two women meet each other on the street, they salute something

like this: When they are about ten yards apart, they stop and bow, each toward the other, keeping this up at every step. At length they meet, and their heads are almost touching, and descending and ascending with extraordinary unanimity. The two curves described seem perfectly symmetrical and simultaneous. The rule seems to be to bow for every complimentary remark. Then down go their heads, and there is a pause, neither being so impolite as to resume position first. Then come one or two sidelong glances to see if each is ready, the heads curve back together, and the ceremony is over.

A common sight in a Japanese street is the traveling restaurant. It is a curious concern, and rather difficult to describe. First of all there are two things like bureaus. These stand about five feet high, and are perhaps two feet

square. The lower part of both of them contains many drawers and little shelves, in which are stored tea, flour, candies, and Japanese delicacies for which we know no name. About half way up one of them is a flat shelf, with a sunken hole in the middle about one foot square. In this are a few charcoal ashes. Here the owner stands, and with a little griddle makes waffle cakes for his customers, for the modest sum of a cent apiece. Crowds of hungry men and women gather round him, and have their appetites appeased in this manner. He serves tea without milk or sugar for a *cash* per cup. A cash is about a thousandth part of a dollar. The two bureaus, as we have designated them, are slung on a bamboo pole, and the owner walks along between them, carrying his all on his shoulder. These venders are adorned with little bells, so as to let people know when they are coming.

Earthquakes are common in Japan. We were told that there were several one week during our stay at Yokohama, but I cannot say that my nerves were sensitive enough to feel any of them. There are frequently violent shocks, and great damage has been done from time to time. But latterly there has been nothing of a serious nature. Another dreaded agent of death, as feared by the Japanese, is fire. These are of frequent occurrence. They have fire-brigades and fire-engines; but as they are drawn by coolies, it takes much time to get them to the scene of action, and the houses, thin as match-boxes, burn like touch-wood. But despite the modern instruments used to extin-

guish the flames, the Japs still cling tenaciously to the belief in a "fire god." They have a small image which is supposed to have control of the flames, and as soon as a fire breaks out, they rush to the top of the house with it, and stand holding it aloft on the shingles. But still the flames will come, and when the one holding the deity finds things too warm for him, he drops the god, leaves him to his fate, and runs to save, if possible, his own skin.

Three sounds in a Japanese city break the stillness of the night,—the *amma*, or blind doctor, the thief-watch, and the fire-watch.

Blindness seems to be a calamity inflicted by the good Creator on many in Japan. The members of the first-named class are very numerous. They are usually doctors practicing the Chinese system. They are known as "shampoo doctors." They carry, men and women alike, a piece of bamboo made into a rude, shrill whistle, which they blow at intervals of a few minutes, so as to warn the vehicles to move out of their way, and not run over them. They give a rude kind of massage to those desiring it, for which they receive remuneration to the amount of half a sen (cent). And this is considered good pay.

The thief-watch is supposed to be some protection against house-breakers, but we would lay him down as of great assistance to them. He parades the streets and alleys during the night, and carries in his hands two pieces of wood, which are hollowed in the middle. These he raps together, and being hollow, they make a loud noise, so that the thieves, hearing it, can make good their escape.

The fire-watch is on the lookout for flames. He carries a lantern, and a stick on which are fastened several pieces of iron, which clash at every step he takes.

P. T. M.

THE STORY OF A CARPET.

[The following story, published in tract form by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, contains suggestions well worth consideration at this season of gift-giving. When we think of the millions on whom light from the Holy Word has not yet shone, and upon whom it will never shine unless we send it to them, how necessary it seems that each one should do what he can to send the gospel rays into the darkness.

Almost nineteen hundred years ago, a Friend came to give us an unspeakably precious gift, even eternal life. He taught right-doing, he relieved suffering, he shed blessings wherever he went; and he left word, when he went away, that those who loved him should follow his example, and do works like his. How small any gifts we may make look beside sacrifice like this! Yet we call it liberality when out of our abundance we give that which we can spare as well as not. At this season of gift-giving we love to show our friends, in some tangible way, our appreciation of them. In what way shall we show our Best Friend our love for him? Is there not some self-denial we can make? Can we not sacrifice our desire to give fine gifts to our friends, in order that those who toil in hardship and loneliness in foreign fields may have means to carry on the work? Let us think about it; let us pray over it; and let us give in accordance with the blessings Heaven gives us daily.—Ed.]

I used to read to my children from that most delightful of children's books, Hans Andersen, the story of the Magic Carpet, which would carry its owner anywhere in the world. I want to tell you now of a carpet just as wonderful. An old, *old* carpet, which has been transformed by some magic into one bright and beautiful. This is how it came about:—

I am a housewife, and enjoy having things as pretty and fresh and suitable as most housewives do. On the stairs, *first* floor stairs, too, was a carpet, once good as well as beautiful, but now shabby, worn, yes, I have to confess it, fearfully *old*.

For a year or more it had been an annoyance and mortification, but the time never seemed to come when something else was not more necessary, and it was made to "do." At last it was pronounced as past that period. It could not be made to "do" any longer, and money was appropriated for a new one.

Just then the appeals for foreign mission work came home with more and more force, and there was a mental struggle. "The carpet was a necessity." "It was no longer respectable," etc., etc.

Well! the Board got the money, and I really thought I had made a sacrifice.

Not so! the fairies have been at work, and my carpet is brodered all over with beauty. As I go up, step by step, it speaks to me. Here is a worn spot where the pattern is almost invisible, but it says, "Precious truths have been woven into the heart of some girl in Japan which will make her life a

perfect pattern to be followed by the women of that nation, so earnestly, so enthusiastically striving for a higher life, and *your* little self-denial has done this."

Here are other bare places, which look as though a troop of rosy, rolicking children had been rushing up and down, with feet none too daintily shod for out-door play. These say, "Think of *your* children now, just entering on Christian manhood and womanhood, and then of the little ones of China, unwelcome at birth, with feet tortured and bound in youth, and of the aimless, ignorant, hopeless lives of maturer years. The day is coming, and perhaps a little more speedily through *your* sacrifice when 'these from the land of Sinim' shall be the free and merry children of a Christian land."

I step on—here are long, bare places, worn by the ceaseless tread on the edge of the steps, and another voice, a *grateful* voice, reminds me of "the little child widows of India, ceaselessly trodden under the iron foot of custom, until all the bloom and beauty and freshness of young lives is crushed and worn into one long, weary, dull round of suffering, and perhaps, by *your* small sacrifice, relief is one step nearer the poor little child-widows of India."

And so my old, worn carpet has become bright with beautiful lessons. Fair flowers of Christian hope and life and light blossom all over it, and the unintelligible language of these Eastern sisters is translated to me by my own heart's need.

When traveling in those Eastern lands by caravan, years ago, we would arise in the early morning, long before dawn, to prepare for our day's journey. We would be aroused by the jangle of the *bells* as the mules and horses were being made ready for their loads. Of all kinds and sizes and sounds, from the large iron bell, with deep, discordant tone, to the silvery chain hung on the neck of the leading horse of the caravan. Jingle! jangle! jingle! jangle! each of different note or key; each discordant with the other, but all, when united, producing most delightful harmony, which I often recall to this day with exquisite pleasure.

So with the voices which speak as I ascend my stair: the deep guttural of Chinese women, the softer tones of fair Japan, and the musical flowing ripple of India's dusky daughters as they sing:—

"Ni chara na mute, nam mitte, nam mitte,
Ni pada mule, battiti battiti."

"Thy refuge would I seek,
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus.
Thy mercy-giving feet would I clasp.
Blessed Jesus."

These all unite in a sweet strain as I pass upward. Mingling with them I hear a silvery voice, which, like a theme in music, now louder, now soft and low, but ever sustained, ever recurring, until, as I reach the last step, it sings: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto *Me*."

This is the magic which has wrought this transformation. This has filled the poor, worn covering with music and beauty.

"Ye have done it unto Me,
Ye have done it—unto *Me*."
—Mrs. Henry N. Cobb.

THE LAST WILL OF OUR LORD.

THE New Testament is the last will of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has died to make it valid, so that now it is in force, and he is now fulfilling its bequest.

How sad it is that many of those who are by bequest heirs of this glorious inheritance, live and die unconscious of it!

Let us look into "THE WILL" of Jesus, and see what are the legacies, and who are the legatees.

1. I will that all the debts of those who trust in me be transferred to my account. To this end I establish a bank of redemption, where all who will present their accounts, even though they are over ten thousand talents, shall be freely discharged on my account.

2. For present support I give to all the weary and heavy laden, rest.

To the thirsty I give the water of life; and the water that I give shall be in them a well of water, and he that drinketh it shall never thirst.

To those who have left houses or lands or kindred for my sake, I give in this life a hundred-fold, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

3. For final inheritance, I will that all who have been given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. I go to prepare a place for them.

To my sheep that hear my voice and follow me, I give eternal life, and no man shall pluck them out of my hand.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, to sit with me on my throne; even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his

throne. He shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.

To him that is faithful unto death I give a crown of life.

To them that endure with me my temptations I appoint a kingdom; and they shall be kings and priests unto God.

Now are you remembered in this will? Have you laid your sins on Jesus as your Mediator? Do you trust him, follow him, wear his yoke, overcome, bear reproach for him? Then shall those blessed legacies be yours.

Spread the information! Poor, benighted sinner, come and inherit all things. "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."—*Good Words*.

"MY HOUNDS ARE ALL PUPS!"

CAN children understand deep truths? The following true incident may answer the query.

Fred and Rom, two hearty, mischievous boys of ten and eight years, had seated themselves by mother's knee for "their hour" before retiring.

To-night it was spent in listening to a story of some wolves—their character, tricks, habits, and homes; the moral suggested the wolves of sin,—as profanity, quarreling, disobedience, selfishness, Sabbath-breaking,—till quite a pack was set in array.

No remedy for these wolves was intimated, so with quick insight the mother asked, "Boys, what do they hunt wolves with?"

"Hounds,—they'll catch 'em!" shouted Fred.

"Yes, and what hounds shall we have to hunt these wolves of disobedience, selfishness, and the like?"

Fred thought a moment, then said soberly, "The hound of prayer would be a good one." "And the hound of faith is another," added Rom. "Yes, and watchfulness and forgiveness are two more capital ones," said Fred.

Each lad added others, till there was a fine pack ready for the chase; and the boys hunted each other off to bed as hound and wolf.

Next morning, nothing was to Fred's liking; his clothes, his hair, his breakfast, everything seemed askew.

"What about the hounds this morning?" said the father, who had quietly overheard the animated discussion of the previous evening.

"Yes," chimed in Rom, "Trot 'em out!"

"Bring them on, Fred," added the father.

But Fred sat glum and stiff.

At length, not a smile suggesting itself on his usually radiant face, he said, "My hounds are all pups! They aren't good for anything," and, bursting into tears, rushed to his room, overcome with the truth that his good resolutions were only "pups,"—good in promise, but of themselves useless when most needed.

DON'T.

A TRUE Christian never snubs anybody; yet the habit of slighting, snubbing, or looking down upon less fortunate acquaintances is common enough to make the following advice very timely:—

Don't snub a boy because he wears shabby clothes. When Edison, the inventor of the telephone, first entered Boston, he wore a pair of yellow linen breeches in the depth of winter.

Don't snub a boy because his home is plain and unpretending. Abraham Lincoln's early home was a log cabin.

Don't snub a boy because of the ignorance of his parents. Shakespeare, the world's poet, was the son of a man who was unable to write his own name.

Don't snub a boy because he chooses a humble trade. The author of "Pilgrim's Progress" was a tinker.

"Don't snub a boy because of physical disability. Milton was blind.

Don't snub a boy because of dullness in his lessons. Hogarth, the celebrated painter and engraver, was a stupid boy at his books.

Don't snub a boy because he stutters. Demosthenes, the great orator of Greece, overcame a harsh and stammering voice.

Don't snub any one—not alone because some day they may outstrip you in the race of life, but because it is neither kind, nor right, nor Christian.—*Selected*.

THERE is a fountain within high-water mark on the sea-shore. The tide spreads over it. The sweet water is spoiled by the salt wave. But the tide goes down, and the fountain washes itself free from defilement. As that troubled sea goes down once more, the fountain gushes still pure and sweet. This is the emblem of a life in daily conflict with adverse circumstances. Overrun, and yet bubbling up ever, pure, fresh, continuous.

For Our Little Ones.

For the INSTRUCTOR.

KNITTING.

SHE had a look both sweet and wise,
A smile was hiding in her eyes,
As, in the window sitting,
She took up grandma's knitting,
And clicked the needles to and fro,
Just as she'd seen dear grandma do.

A bird was singing in the snow,
That she'd no ears to listen to,
As, in the window sitting,
She gravely kept on knitting,
And made her little fingers go,
Just as she'd seen dear grandma's do.

The flowers were blooming near her face,
But she'd no time to note their grace,
She did not think of quitting
Her most delightful knitting,
But clicked and clicked her needles bright,
And knit away with all her might.

And by and by her head dropped low,
Just as dear grandma's used to do,
As, in her rocker sitting,
She fell asleep while knitting,
And grandma came to find her stocking,
And said, "Dear! dear! this knitting's
shocking!"

She had to take the needles out,
And ravel all the top about,
It made her work just double
For all the darling's trouble,
But grandma stooped and kissed her brow,
And said, "I'll teach the dear child how."

And when Miss Lillie's sleep was done,
Dear grandma took the little one,
And by her rocker sitting,
She taught her about knitting,
And oh, it gave the child delight
To set the stitches in just right.

And grandma told her something queer,
And yet it's very true, my dear,
That every one is knitting,
Stitch dropping or stitch setting,
Knitting with deeds of love or strife,
Making a garment out of life.

And grandma said that double
Would come in care or trouble,
If we should try life's knitting
Without first lowly sitting
Close to the feet of Christ, who could
Teach us the way to make it good.

FANNIE BOLTON.

BILLY.

JOHN and Fred Evans were very
much troubled. They had at-
tended a missionary meeting
the day before, which had deeply
stirred their young hearts.

Both boys had recently given
their hearts to the Saviour. In the
first glow of their early love, they
were eager to show their gratitude
to Jesus, who had loved them and
died for them that they might have eternal life.

Here was their first opportunity for doing some-
thing for Jesus; but what could they do?

It was the evening of the second day after they had
heard the missionary tell of the needs of the poor
heathen. There was to be another meeting the next
night, when the people were going to bring him their
offerings, and then he was going away.

The boys had discussed and dismissed plan after
plan for raising or earning money; and it was not
until they had gone to bed, that John told Fred the
project that caused such trouble in both little hearts.

Fred called over to John, and said,—

"I say, John, I wish we hadn't spent all our allow-
ance on that foot-ball. They wouldn't take it back,
either, 'cause we've kicked it. Oh, dear! I wish you
could think of something."

"Fred," said John, hesitatingly, "there is some-
thing; I thought of it the first thing."

"You did? Why didn't you tell me?"

"'Cause it's—it's—Billy." And John pulled the
blanket over his head to hid the springing tears, for-
getting that it was "pitch dark."

"John Evans! Are you crazy? I'd most as soon
think of selling Ethel."

John said nothing for some time. At last he
pulled down the blanket, steadied his voice, and
said,—

"It would be wicked to sell our sister, if we could;
but Billy is only a goat, and even if we do love him, it
wouldn't be wrong to sell him."

"That's it," replied Fred. "We do love him—at
least, I do—as much as if he was a—a person."

John made no reply. At last he said,—

"Of course you're thinking of that fifteen dollars
Mr. Jones said he'd give for Billy, if we ever wanted
to sell him, 'cause some gentleman in the city wanted
a trained goat for his little lame boy."

"Yes; and how long fifteen dollars would keep a
little Karen chap in Mr. Dalton's school."

Fred turned his face to the wall, and tried to go to
sleep, but he could not. He tossed and tumbled,
rolled and kicked.

At last he got up, and went over to John's bed.
John was fast asleep.

they would never regret their sacrifice; and they
never did.—Selected.

MAKING ROOM.

JACK and Charley sat on the kitchen door-step, in
the shade of the big willow-tree, eating their morning
lunch of crisp soda-crackers. Jack's pet bantams,
forgetting for the time their important little strut,
scrambled so eagerly after the crumbs that every now
and then the boys' bare toes got a vigorous pick from
their greedy little bills.

Little four-year-old Matty, hearing the boys laugh,
wanted her share of the fun. She ran to the door,
cracker in hand, and said, eagerly,—

"Let me sit there too!"

But Charley's blue flannel knees were so wide apart
that one of them touched Jack's gray jeans, and the
other lay against the door casing. Against the opposite casing leaned
Jack's head and shoulder. So it
happened that Charley said hastily,—

"There isn't any room."

And in the same breath Jack said
crossly,—
"Oh, go 'way, Matty, and find
some other place. It's too crowded
with you."

Matty put her little blue gingham
sleeve up to her eyes, and left a trail
of cracker crumbs across the kitchen
floor, as she ran to lay her curly
head on mamma's lap, and sob out
that the boys had n't any room for
her to help feed the chickies. But
in a minute Charley's voice rang out
in the kindest of tones:—

"Come on, Matty; here's room
for you."

And Jack called also:—

"Yes, plenty of room, right be-
tween us."

Matty brushed away her tears, and
ran back to the kitchen door. Sure
enough, between the blue flannel and
the gray jeans was room enough
for two such little mites of girls as
she was.

"How did you happen to find
room so quickly?" asked mamma,
smiling.

"We made it," said Charley, put-
ting his arm lovingly about Matty's
shoulders, and throwing out a big
crumb for Mr. and Mrs. Bantam
to scramble after.

"Remember, dearies," said grand-
ma from her corner, "there's plenty
of room in the world for every kindly
deed, if we only choose to make it."
—Selected.

THE CANDLE FISH.

Of course, wherever it is night,
people must have some sort of light
to see by. Among us, lamps, gas,
and so on, are used. But what do
you suppose people do where there
is nothing of this kind? Why, in

some places they use one thing; in others, another.
In Alaska and other far-away lands to the north, all
they have to do is to set a candle fish on fire, and
they have a good, clear light, which will last more
than an hour.

The candle fish is about ten inches long, and some-
what the shape of our slender smelt. It is very fat,
and just the thing to make a lamp of. The natives
fasten it in a rude kind of candlestick, made of
strips of white oak, and set it on fire. They light
it at the head, and it burns steadily away, down to
the very tail.

Of all the queer ways to make a lamp to read or sew
by, I think this is the queerest. Nature seems to
provide almost everything needed by the people in
the place where they live. The candle fish is so oily
that it cannot be preserved, even in alcohol. The
nights at the far north are very long, and if it were
not for this fish, the people would be most of their
time in entire darkness.—Our Little Ones.

It is not an easy matter to hold back an angry
word when it is at the tongue's end; but even this is
a great deal easier than it is to recall an angry word
when it is once spoken. If the angry word be not
spoken now, it can be spoken by and by—if necessary;
therefore it is wiser to hold it back until there is no
doubt that it needs to be spoken.—Selected.



"Humph! he don't care," muttered Fred, but he
touched the pillow, and found it wet with tears.

Back he went to his own bed without waking his
brother, but not to sleep. After another hour he
slipped out of bed again, and knelt beside it.

The heaving shoulders and wet spot on the spread
where his head rested told of the struggle he was
passing through.

Once more he crept into bed, and fell asleep at once.
When he wakened in the morning, John was gone.
He thought he knew where to find him. Dressing
quickly, he ran to the barn, and there was John, with
his arm around Billy's neck, crying.

"John!" said Fred.

"Well?"

"L—I—do love Billy; but I—I—do love Jesus.
Let's take Billy over before breakfast."

"I knew you would do it, Freddie boy," said John,
gently.

It was not far to Mr. Jones's, and the boys had fin-
ished their tearful explanation of the reason why they
were going to sell Billy. There were tears in his eyes,
too, though a smile brightened his face, and he in-
sisted upon giving twenty dollars instead of the fif-
teen offered.

Two happy boys laid ten dollars apiece in Mr. Dal-
ton's hand that evening, and when he so bountifully
invoked God's blessing upon the boys, they felt sure

THE MUTUAL FRIEND.

Miss HOLMAN, a quiet, tastefully-dressed maiden lady, with a charming air of old-fashioned loveliness about her, stood in the vine-wreathed door-way of a quaint country parsonage with a hip roof and skylights that looked out into the thick branches of fir-trees standing up stiff and straight like sentinels each side of the door.

"How exactly that dainty little woman fits into the restful picture," thought Mary Wright, a somewhat weary-faced young girl, as she pushed back the gate, walked up the gravel path, and said, pleasantly,—

"Good afternoon, madam. Is Mrs. Holt at home?"

"Not just now," was the reply, "but she left word that any calling friend must wait a little for her. Will you step into the parlor, or shall we sit here?"

"Oh, here, if you please," replied Mary. We shall not be poor company if, as I suppose, Mrs. Holt is our mutual friend."

The older woman looked into the face of the younger with a winsome smile, as she said, in a fresh, cheery voice:—

"Have we not a stronger tie than that? Have we not both the best Friend, who in his own gracious words, said, 'Lo, I am with you alway'?"

"Yes," said Mary, as she took Mrs. Holman's proffered hand, and sat down by her side on the little porch. "Yet it seems easier to speak of a mutual friend who may just at the time be away from us than it is to speak of this best Friend, even though we may love him, and are his professed disciples. I suppose it is because we are timid."

"That thought is a delusion," said Miss Holman, "for you are not at all timid. You were entirely self-contained, my dear, when you came here, and asked for Mrs. Holt just now."

"But I am not alone in this backwardness of speaking of our Saviour," pleaded Mary.

"No, my child, more is the pity. It is a prevailing weakness of Christian society. It is one of the reasons why the world lies so long in wickedness. Christians do not realize their union with the Lord Jesus. If they did, they would have a holy boldness that would make it easy for them, out of loving, loyal hearts, to speak to others about their absent Master."

"Now please tell me what this union with Christ is," said Mary, anxiously. "I know I love him, and yet it is not easy for me to speak of him. It is a heavy cross upon me even to testify of him in our little social meetings, and yet I am more and more dissatisfied with myself because I do not own his name and serve him better."

"Do you remember those words of Paul when he tells us we are the temples of the Holy Spirit?"

"Yes, I often recall them, but how am I to realize their significance?"

"By cheerfully going forward and showing the religion of the Master in just as pleasing and desirable an aspect as possible, by being self-poised, patient, charitable always, long-suffering, gentle, pure in thought and in expression, not only with fellow-Christians, but with the world's people; and so you shall make an abiding impression on them for good."

"But," said Mary, "how can I do all this, and yet live my every-day life, guarding my walk and talk with almost everybody, Christian and unbeliever alike, with whom I come in contact?"

"That is just the point, my dear. If, when you meet with those who know nothing of this Saviour so precious to you, you do not fail to speak of him, your fancied timidity will be dispelled, and your life will become a joyous one right away. And then if you will talk with fellow-disciples in loving, loyal reference to our common Lord, you will doubtless find them responsive."

"I was set to work," continued Miss Holman earnestly, "just after my conversion, by carrying out this idea of a mutual friend, and in every instance the words I wanted to say have been put into my mouth in some way, as they were by you this afternoon. It has been my privilege to point out this way to scores of others, and if they, each in turn, are faithful, what may not that one simple thought accomplish? If each man, woman, and child who finds Him would only come out from the world in the sense of making it their chief joy to serve Him by telling some one else of him, what a work might be done!"

"I often feel a burden for the unconverted," said Mary, "and I pray for them."

"And so do scores who do not use the means God has given them to carry on his work of saving sinners. We have opportunities constantly of working for Jesus. He sends some one every day to me. This afternoon it was you, dear. I might have let the opportunity slip—there were plenty of other pleasant things to talk about."

"Nothing so pleasant as this," said Mary, looking through her tears into the gentle face beside her. "I was feeling utterly dissatisfied with my life, well knowing that I was doing nothing at all; that in a spiritual sense my life was a blank to those about me. What religion I have is folded up and hid away in my breast for my own secret comfort, and I came to ask Mrs. Holt, provided I could muster the courage, how I could set myself at work, and without asking a question, my query is solved. It seems to me the Lord must have known of my perplexity."

"Do not doubt it, dear," said Miss Holman. "But there comes Mrs. Holt, with her face that is always like a benediction, so full of peace is she. And some time, my child, you and I and all those whom we have helped, shall stand before our best Friend in heaven. Think of that as well as of his sweet service here below, and so take courage to make his work your chief joy."—Selected.

"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL."

"MAMMA, that new girl at our school is just horrid, and I don't mean to have anything more to do with her."

"Why, Nettie!" and her mother looked up in surprise; for only last week Nettie had come home full of the excellences of the new girl, whom she declared she meant to have for a bosom friend.

"Well, she is horrid, mamma, and you will think so too, when I tell you what I saw her doing. I caught her deliberately stealing, at least it was just the same thing as stealing. Miss Wharton said she would give a prize to the girl who staid up at the head of the class all the week, and Nan Holmes was at the head the day she gave out about the prize. Of course she has been working awfully hard to stay there, and to-day the examples were so very hard that we were all sure that no one would be able to get them right, and we knew Nan would be as likely to have as many mistakes as the rest of us, but she didn't, and how do you suppose she prevented it, mamma? She copied the answers from the key Miss Wharton keeps in her desk. I saw her doing it my own self, and so of course she kept at the head of the class. She had two mistakes, to be sure, but those she must have put in wrong, just so that Miss Wharton wouldn't suspect anything."

"How do you know that she did such a thing, daughter?" asked her mother, gravely.

"Because I saw her, mamma," protested Nettie. "I went into the school-room at recess, and there was no one there but Nan, and she had her slate, and was standing by Miss Wharton's desk, copying something as fast as she could, and she looked real guilty when she saw me. She couldn't have been doing anything else but copying, of course, and her having her examples so much better than the rest of us proves it!"

"No, dear, I don't think that the mere fact of her getting the examples right proves that she had copied the answers, and it is quite possible that she might have been doing something else at the desk. I admit that it did look as if her errand there was what you think it was, but you must not say, or even let yourself think such a thing, as long as you cannot be positive of it. Take the best view of anything rather than the worst, and think what a dreadful thing it would be if you should accuse her of such a thing wrongfully."

"I am sure she did steal the answers, though," persisted Nettie.

"I do not want you to say anything about it to any of the girls, though," said Mrs. Morton. "Remember, Nettie, I have forbidden you to speak of it. You are very apt to be hasty in your statements, and this is too grave a thing to accuse a schoolmate of, unless there could not be a possible chance of mistake."

Nettie did not tell her mother that she had already spoken of it, but she remembered, with a sigh of relief, that she had only told her dearest friend, and she had promised not to tell, so there was no danger that the story would spread. Nettie felt as if all the girls ought to know by what means Nan had kept her place at the head of the class, but since her mother had so positively forbidden her to speak of it, she did not venture to disobey her.

Unfortunately, Nettie's dearest friend had told another friend, and she in turn had confided in another, and in a day or two Nan found that the girls who had been so pleasant and friendly at first were all turning a cold shoulder toward her, and leaving her out of all their games.

She was a sensible little girl, and tried to think that it was only a fancy, and did all in her power to win their friendship, but at last she had to come

to the conclusion that they wanted to have nothing to do with her.

A disagreeable remark that she partly overheard about "people who were not above stealing" nearly broke her heart, and she went home and cried herself sick.

The next morning her mother came to the school, and insisted upon knowing why her daughter had met with so much unkindness from her schoolmates, and Miss Wharton investigated the matter at once.

It was easily sifted.

The first girl who was questioned said that "Nettie Morton had caught Nan copying the answers to her examples, and she had said it was just as bad as stealing to keep her place at the head of the class in that way."

Nettie was called upon at once to explain, and her mortification was almost overwhelming when Miss Wharton told her that on the day in question the key was not in the desk, as she had it up in her room where she was correcting some examples during recess. Nan had gone, by her teacher's permission, to the desk to copy some examples which had been given orally to the scholars, and which she had accidentally rubbed off her slate.

Nettie cried bitterly as she found out how falsely she had accused her schoolmate, and how much unhappiness she had caused by her hasty words.

"Nettie, I hope this will be a lesson to you to be slow in judging others," said Miss Wharton, who was justly annoyed at the trials that Nan had had to endure. "You accused Nan of stealing, but you broke the eighth commandment just as surely when you took away another's good name without cause."

It was a hard lesson, but Nettie remembered it.—*Youth's Evangelist.*

BE THOROUGH.

"I NEVER do a thing thoroughly," Mary said to me the other day. She had just been competing for a prize in composition.

"I only read my composition once after I wrote it, and I never practiced it in the chapel at all."

She was naturally far more gifted than Alice, who was her principal competitor. Alice wrote and re-wrote her article, and practiced it again and again.

The day came. Alice read her composition in a clear, distinct voice, without hesitation or lack of expression. It was condensed and well written. Mary's could not be heard beyond the fifth row of seats, and was long and uninteresting.

Alice won the prize. One remembered and the other forgot that truth so trite, but so aptly put by Carlyle, "Genius is an immense capacity for taking trouble."—Selected.

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