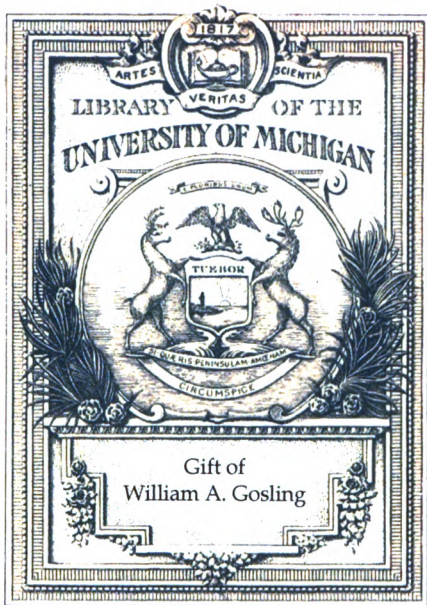


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MRS. HARRY HARPER'S AWAKENING.

BY PANSY

AUTHOR OF "ESTER RIED," "FOUR GIRLS AT CHAUTAUQUA,"
"THE CHAUTAUQUA GIRLS AT HOME," "LINKS IN REBEC-
CA'S LIFE," "RUTH ERSKINE'S CROSSES," "A NEW
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MRS. HARRY HARPER'S AWAKENING

CHAPTER I.

CARRIED BY A GOOD CURRENT.



FAIR-FACED blue-eyed, golden-haired beauty! A child-wife. There were times when you could not help feeling it to be almost pitiful, that, so early in her girlhood, she had assumed the cares and responsibilities of womanhood. Especially as her girlhood had been spent in a fashionable seminary, where she

learned about as much of the responsibilities of life as a bright-winged bird, hovering over a summer garden, learns of the affairs of state. Two experiences in her life stood out with ever-vivid clearness and freshness. Indeed, both were so recent that they could hardly yet be said to be among her past experiences.

One was, when white-robed and flower-decked, and with just the requisite number of buttons to her white kids, and just the right tint of yellow to her rich laces, she had stood, with pink cheeks and shining eyes, and held her daintily perfumed sheets of tinted paper, delicately tied with a ribbon that matched her eyes, and, with sweetly modulated voice that could not be heard twenty feet away

from the platform, and with a strong throbbing of her frightened heart, that it seemed to her could be heard all over the hall, read her essay entitled: "*The Procession of the Hours.*" During the reading a gorgeously attired butterfly looked in upon the scene, swam airily across the hall, and lighted for a moment on the bouquet of tube roses that decked the stand; and it was impossible to avoid the notion that it knew almost as much about the *Procession*, and took in as solemn a sense of its tremendous possibilities, as did the trembling bit of flesh and blood beside it. Nevertheless there was an immeasurable distance between them; the butterfly sailed off into space, and was thought of no more; and the reader received presently her

solemn-looking roll of yellow parchment which told that she had completed the curriculum of study laid down by that old established and intensely respectable institution; completed, indeed, the circle of the sciences. Then she stepped out into life, an immortal, never to be lost sight of; living still when the butterfly's wings shall have mingled with the dust of ages!

The other experience followed fast upon this, when, white-robed again, she stood, this time with a wreath of orange blossoms about her fair hair, and a veil of rarest lace, pinned by a diamond of almost priceless value, trailed along the central aisle of Westminster Church, while the organ swelled its melody until the very arches caught the sound and

seemed to repeat them. This time her face was almost as pale as the satin dress she wore; for among the long *Procession of the Hours* had come to her the solemn one in which she was to speak the irrevocable "I do," which would make of those two "no more twain, but one flesh."

Thus had Mrs. Harry Harper been whirled through life; day-school, dancing-school, boarding-school, marriage vows, until she was stranded at last on the second floor of a fashionable hotel in a fashionable city, totally strange to her, and with absolutely nothing to do, not so much as to arrange the knick-knacks on her toilet-case. What in the name of common sense was this stranded young pearl to do with the *hours*?

Calls? Well she was a stranger; the husband was a recent importation from a large business house to this branch firm in this smaller city; only smaller though, by comparison with one so many degrees larger; for, in itself, it *thought* itself a large and important city. In time there would doubtless be many calls to return, for Harry Harper was not one to remain long unknown. Shopping? Why bless your heart, she was a bride! Don't you remember how that genius of the last decade characterized American mothers as those beings who acted, when their daughters were about to marry, as though all dry goods stores were to be closed for at least six months and a half year of *Sabbath* were to celebrate the event. Assuredly, Mrs.

Harry Harper, though she looked lovingly in at the pretty things in the windows as she passed, could not recall a single want, or, what is more extraordinary, even a single *wish* ungratified in that line. Books? Oh, yes; well, she had plenty of them, elegantly bound; standard works; but, truth to tell, she was weary of books. Had she not often eaten her lunch with a French reader spread open on her knee, and a French dictionary under her arm? Had she not slept many a night with a treatise on some bewildering science under her pillow? It made her sigh to think of books; sometime, perhaps, away in the future, when a silver thread was beginning to gleam in the gold of her hair, she might learn to like books again,

but not now. This is one of the interesting results of the cramming process in certain fashionable schools.

Was Mrs. Harry Harper a Christian? I find that I hesitate over the question; and yet, yes, after careful thought I believe I may say, she was. A blessed wave of Christian influence had swept even over the fashionable seminary, but a few months before she graduated (and, if I had time, it would be interesting to go back and tell you of the apparently trivial line of incidents that led to this remarkable result); but she was just a babe in Christ: an un nourished babe at that. There had been those who rejoiced over her conversion, who kissed her with tears in their eyes, and told her they were glad; and they

were; and then they had left her to stumble along as best she might. True, she was a *babe*; her feet were tottering; she might fall, and then it would be sad, and then, possibly, somebody would run to her and try to help her up; but in the meantime no one thought to so support the weak steps that they would have no need to fall.

So Mrs. Harry Harper came to this strange city, without any very settled or intelligent understanding of what she ought to do, or how in the least to do it. Her husband was a Christian, it is true; had been for years; at least he had been a church-member; but if he had ever felt the importance of the profession, and the measure of his responsibility, he had long buried the

feeling in a whirl of successful business; so that up to the time when our story opens, husband and wife had never exchanged a dozen sentences on the subject of personal religious experience. As regarded the hundred avenues of Christian work, fields white to the harvest on every hand, waiting for the laborers, Mrs. Harry was as ignorant as a humming-bird, and her husband was not very many degrees in advance of her.

So behold her, on this sunny spring morning, arrayed in the most exquisite of spring costumes, ready for a walk; yet as she gave careful attention to the many buttons on her gloves, there was a shade of irresolution, even weariness, on her pretty face. She went out for

a walk every morning, because Harry said she ought to exercise, and because it was less wearisome than to stay in the house. Yet she had nowhere to go, nothing to do, no interest in the people whom she met, or the sights that she saw. Her whole life had been spent in a larger and much more brilliant city. How was she going to get through with the weary hours that intervened between now and the time when Harry would rush in from his distant store? No fear of loneliness after that. They were sufficient to each other, these two.

The weary look deepened into one of positive discontent as she moved slowly along the busy street; everybody seemed to have a special desti-

nation in view, and be eager to get there. Everybody was in a hurry save herself. Especially was she impressed with the fact that an unusual number of women were abroad; interesting-looking women; many of them in travelling attire; many of them with an air of earnestness, or of definiteness, that in her listless mood, impressed her keenly.

Who were they, and where could they all be hurrying? Why were there so many more of them this morning than usual? She would like to know some of them; their faces interested her, rested her; yes, for she actually felt *tired!* There is really nothing that will tire one so utterly and hopelessly as idleness. Presently, as she studied the faces of the people who were all

going in an opposite direction from herself, a new feature about them attracted her attention. They wore on the left shoulder, or fastened to their pins, or chains, somewhere about them, modest-looking bits of white ribbon, bearing the cabalistic letters: "W. P. B. F. M." What *could* those letters mean? She found herself utterly unfamiliar with them. It must be a convention of some sort. She shuddered at the thought! A convention of women! What a disagreeable sight must that be! Did they argue, she wondered? Did their faces grow red with passion? Did they call each other hard names, and fling bitter sarcasms at one another, as she had heard her father and brother tell of the political conventions belonging

strictly to the male sex? But what could the letters represent? "Woman's Right's?" No. The "W" would do; but what about the rest? Perhaps it was a benevolent society, and they had a fair somewhere in the city. She would rather like to attend, if that were the case. Then she tried to fit the letters. "Woman's Fancy Bazaar"—*was* it W. F. B.? No, there were other letters, and this wasn't the order in which they came. She studied the next badge carefully. What *could* that stand for? and the B. was before the F. It couldn't mean *Fancy Bazaar*; she knew there was a great rage in this country for copying the French; but surely the fever would not have led them to want to say "Bazaar Fancy." She tried

again: "Woman's Purchasing Bazaar for —" Well for what? Ignoring the fact that it would be a very awkward sentence thus far, what was she to do with the "M.?" She amused herself by fitting all sorts of probable and improbable words to it, trying to make a reasonable conclusion.

"I wonder where the meeting, or the fair, or whatever it is, is held?" she asked herself. "How they are crowding along! Why as many as a hundred ladies must have passed me! I believe I will turn and follow them. It must be a proper enough place to go, since so many ladies are hurrying that way. Nice-looking ladies, too; some of them are *noble*-looking." Possessed with that silly idea, common to womankind, that

to turn squarely around in the street and walk in the opposite direction, would draw the attention of the crowd, she turned instead into a stationery store, near at hand, and made a purchase of the first article on which her eye alighted, which proved to be a very small blank book. Then she boldly joined the W. P. B. F. M., bent on learning the attraction, whatever it was. Only a short walk around the corner, down another block, and the procession of women ahead of her filed into a great church. She hesitated. What if it were a matter belonging strictly to themselves? A secret society, such as the gentleman had—was it proper for her to follow? But then, such a company of them, and in the broad sunlight of a

week day morning, and in a church; it must be proper enough to see what there was of interest.

"We are late," said a sweet-voiced lady at her elbow; "I am sorry; I dislike to enter a meeting after it has opened." This sounded friendly; Mrs. Harry could not do other than smile upon her, and admit that it was unpleasant.

"Walk right in: this way, ladies," said the cheery voice of an usher. "You will not disturb the meeting; they are just attending to a little item of business." Then Mrs. Harry found herself following his lead and entering the audience-room of the handsome church. There seemed to her to be more genuine cordiality in the invitation than

she had received in a church since she left her own home. Instantly her eye was attracted by the display of flowers and vines on the platform. How perfectly aglow with beauty they were! The whole church was pervaded with a faint, delicate perfume like the breath of a summer morning, and the ladies on the platform were as though they dwelt inside a bower of the Lord's own fashioning. Whose hand but his could have furnished the cool, green, graceful ferns, bending their feathery branches on every side? Whose hand but his could have fashioned the lilies in their glory, as they smiled on this young worshiper of beauty, and drew her instinctively down the aisle, instead of dropping into the first seat that offered? The bright-

faced lady who had addressed her was just at hand, and smiled an appreciation of the beauty, and murmured as they took seats together: "'Consider the lilies.' Doesn't that platform make you think of it?" No, it hadn't. The young bride was all too unaccustomed to the Bible to have familiar verses spring to her heart to match the sight of her eyes. But she thought of it now, and supplied the rest of the verse, and took a new lesson in the power and care of the beauty-loving God.

CHAPTER II.

DID SHE BELONG?



THE choir were singing a strong, grand hymn; new to her, as indeed most hymns were; but the tune carried her back to a certain evening in the seminary chapel, when, with beating heart and tear-wet eyes, she bowed her head in prayer, and felt, for the first time, the presence of One to whom she said, "*My Lord and my God.*" The rush of recent events had, sadly enough, already set this sweet memory in the background, but it came back

to her in full force this morning, and helped to deepen the sense of sweetness and restfulness in the atmosphere about her.

She bowed her head and joined in the prayer that followed, and though it sounded strange indeed to her, coming from a woman's lips, overshadowed by the sanctity of the pulpit, yet the words were so simple, so earnest, so impassioned, that she could not, but in a degree, forget the surroundings and join in the petitions. In the little rustle that followed the prayer, she ventured to address a word of inquiry to the cordial lady beside her.

"Is the woman who prayed a missionary?"

"Oh, no; she is just a worker here

at home; but she is very much in earnest."

Mrs. Harry Harper suppressed outward token of her surprise, but she had not deemed it possible that any one not actually engaged in the mission field could have such a keen, throbbing eagerness of heart for the cause. Truth to tell, she had never even realized that *missionaries* felt as much as that prayer indicated; though, of course, they were, by some mysterious process, unknown to other Christians, gifted with superhuman powers of self-abnegation. Mrs. Harper did not put that belief into actual words, but she represents a by no means small majority, who, in their secret hearts, seem to feel it.

I feel myself unable to picture to you the strangeness of this scene to the child-wife looking on. A great church filled at that hour of the morning with women; a sea of upturned faces—earnest faces, bright faces, young and beautiful faces, old faces crowned with silver hair—*all* of them belonging women. Women on the platform, many of them; unembarrassed, at ease, apparently at home in all the details of management. All of them wearing those fair white ribbons, with those clear black letters, whose signification still eluded her. This was no fancy bazaar: who ever heard of one being thronged at ten of the morning by an army of plainly attired, quietly seated women, bowing their heads in prayer, led by one of

their number! Mrs. Harper was at home in the management of fairs and festivals and fancy tables, and every contrivance of the sort beginning with "f" that she could think of, and none of them presented this front. She glanced about her curiously, the inscriptions on the walls being the next thing that caught her eyes—done in evergreen, evidently prepared for this present occasion; large, plain letters, inclosed in evergreen frames, *Africa, China, India, Syria, Persia.* What had all those far-away countries to do with this gathering of women in the very center of America? Surely these were not missionaries! She scanned them closely; nothing in dress or manner accorded with her somewhat curious ideas of missionaries. Nay, a

glance on the platform revealed the presence of some ladies known to her by sight as belonging to the elite of her own city. Presently she was called from her reverie by the sound of a strong penetrative voice, belonging to a white-haired, majestic looking woman. A little wave of feeling went about the congregation, such as in an indescribable, but perfectly understood, manner reveals the fact that one whom the people love, and have waited for, is before them. Despite the ignorance of the object of all this gathering and the position of the leaders, Mrs. Harper found herself strangely held by the power of the address that followed. Unquestionably the subject was missions. And in regard to that entire subject, viewed from whatever stand-

point, Mrs. Harry Harper was utterly ignorant. She listened to those words, throbbing with eloquence, coming to her from a woman's lips; she listens in fascination. The statistics appalled her! could it be possible that there lived such an army of human beings who had no idea of God! Then certain sentences stood out in startling boldness. "In all these lands," said the speaker, "woman is reduced to the level of the brute." Childhood, wifeness, motherhood, womanhood, home, have no existence there. How could the happy young wife's heart help throbbing a response to this desolation? How *could* the lonely child, who so missed her old home and her mother, feel other than dismayed over the thought that so many knew not the meaning of the

word? Coming back from the reverie into which these words plunged her, she listened again. "Fifty thousand ordained ministers in the United States; to furnish China half as well would empty the Protestant pulpits, and then leave a *deficit*." Mrs. Harper turned her head instinctively and looked at the word *China*, done in evergreen. How immense it was! Why should the people be left in such spiritual blackness? Presently the little lady beside her turned a beaming face her way, nodding assent to a sentence.

"Isn't she grand?" she whispered. Then her eye caught the little blank-book. "You have forgotten your pencil?" she said, inquiringly: "Do you want to take notes?"

All this in a moment, and a carefully sharpened pencil was laid in her hand. Then did Mrs. Harper feel queerly! She had not the slightest idea of taking notes. At that moment came a quotation, new to her entirely, but fitting in so perfectly with the glimmering of solemn thought which had caused her to choose for the subject of her graduation essay: "The Procession of the Hours!" that she immediately copied it in her note-book:

"Eternity, with all its years,
Stands present to thy view,
To thee there's nothing old appears;
Great God! there's nothing new."

Then followed sentences that she did not want to stop to write; sentences

that held her by their pathos and their power. Suddenly she thrilled again over this, and wrote it down, the result amazed her so. She would tell Harry that just as soon as she reached home. Should the five hundred and sixty-seven thousand members of the Presbyterian church, of whom two-thirds are women, give to the Lord's treasury a daily copper, the result would be \$2,069,550 annually! One cent a day! Is it any wonder that the young wife, who could count almost daily and by the dozens the cents that she frittered away, felt her cheeks crimson under the recollection of the amount that she actually gave to the Lord's treasury?

One other sentence she copied into her little book, because it reached *her*

heart; it was this: "As Christ passes from heart to heart to-day —

'Knocking, knocking; who is there?

Waiting, waiting, wondrous fair;'

with adoring reverence and love may each woman exclaim: 'Rabboni what wilt thou have me to do? May the Spirit of all grace descend on each one present; abide with us through this meeting; go with us to our homes, so that we may speak with other tongues, and lead other lives, worthy of Him who for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.'" Let me tell you, with joy, that there thrilled through Mrs. Harper's frame the resolution, "*I* will, I will."

“But,” said the speaker —

Drops of blood can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe.”

And the listener's heart throbbed its answer: “No, it can't; I *can not* take back the past; what can I do?” Listen:

“Here, Lord I give myself away,
'Tis all that I *can* do.”

One listener's eye-lashes were pearled with tears, as, with bowed head and quivering lips, her heart echoed the last word: “I do, I do.”

“Who was that woman?” she asked at last, and abruptly. Other exercises and reports and singing had followed, but her heart had lingered with those closing sentences. The scene changed.

The meeting had adjourned for lunch, and the great throngs of people were filing into the lecture room. Her fair-faced seatmate had moved forward, and she was addressing another stranger.

“The woman who gave the last report, you mean? Why that was Mrs. _____”

“Oh, no; I mean the one who gave the address, the long address about the size of China and—and all that.”

Then I grieve to tell you that the woman stared at her; she could not repress her astonishment!

“Why, that was the president. Is it possible that there is anybody who doesn't know *her!*”

Mrs. Harper was quenched; she felt much as she might have imagined herself

feeling had she unwittingly pointed to the sun and asked, "What is that?" Nevertheless, bent on information she longed to add: "The president of what? And who *is* she? But courage failed her. The bright-eyed lady turned again to her at this point.

"Come right in to lunch. We may as well go now as at any time; the room is large."

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Harper, holding back. What right had she to lunch with this army of workers; she had discovered that she was a drone.

"Oh, you surely will not think of going home!" the lady urged. "The intermission is so short; you will lose some of the addresses if you do; come right in."

And yielding to the pressure of the crowd, allowing herself to be swayed along rather than really going, Mrs. Harper was moved toward the lunch-room.

“Lost your badge?” said a benevolent looking lady, near the platform; “I have an extra one here, let me pin it on.”

And lo! before she could seem to gain voice, or even foothold enough to remonstrate, the deft fingers accomplished their work, and now she was a W. P. B. F. M herself!

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST'S FIRST.



SUPPOSE it would be difficult to explain to you with what curious eyes our little lady looked about her, trying to take in her new surroundings and decide where she was. The people certainly appeared unlike any whom she had ever met; they waited for no introductions, they expressed no surprise, either by look or manner, because of this stranger in their midst; in fact they acted as though they hadn't the

least idea that she was a stranger, but asked her opinion of the exercises and the decorations and the lunch, precisely as though she had always been one of them.

She drank her coffee and ate her sandwich between the chattings, and admitted to herself that lunch had not been such an enjoyable affair since she left her mother's home. For the afternoon session, she took her seat directly in front of the platform, eager to hear all that there was to hear.

It so happened, however, that the reports which filled up the next hour, though full of statistical importance to the initiated, were so entirely about matters of which she knew nothing, that they failed to interest our young fledgling, and she allowed eyes and thoughts

to rove round the beautiful church and admire its decorations. It was just then and there that she raised them high enough to observe, over one of the side arches the fair design in evergreen, a picture of the world, and in the world, its central object to the Christian heart, a cross; surmounting these, in bold lettering, this sentence: *Christ for the World.*" It was not that Mrs. Harry Harper, in common with all civilized humanity, had not known this fact before. It was simply that she, in common with thousands of other woman, had not *realized* it.

There flashed over heart and brain at this moment a dim realization of its meaning. Christ came and lived and suffered and died, not merely for the

dwellers in New York and Boston and Chicago, and the lesser cities that had hitherto made her world, but for the *world!* For China, for Africa, and for those dreadful South Sea Islanders; actually he loved the world. Really loved individually those heathen in their degradation; loved them enough to die for them! It came to Mrs. Harper like a revelation! It struck her for the first time as the wonder of all wonders! The thing over which the world should have an eternal celebration, so long as it was left to roll in space. Now you will readily see how her heart was prepared for the next sight which met her eager eyes. Some change on the platform at that moment called her attention there, and, when her eyes roved again they turned

to the left, and behold, arching over and corresponding with the decoration which she had been studying at the right, was another picture of the world; but this time the cross had been changed for a harp, and was overshadowed by a crowd, and the triumphal motto, in clear-cut evergreen was, "*The World for Christ.*" Our little enthusiast clasped her hands in token of the fullness of her glad satisfaction, while her eyes brimmed with tears. Yes, that was it: the *world* for Christ! After the cross, and all it embodied, what could the world do less than give itself, with all its resources, to the cross, and take, for its triumphal song through the ages, the joyful proclamation of its service? And what could Christians do better than to re-

peat the call, and extend the story and gather in the *world* for the *King*? This, then, was what this meeting was for; these Christian women were after the *world*. Here were the nations of the earth represented on either side, and here was the grand central aim. She did not know their name, nor how they worked, nor have much idea as to what there was that she could do to help; just then and there, while the reports which she did not hear were being read, little Mrs. Harper went over, heart and soul and strength, to the W. P. B. F. M., whatever those letters in their fullness might mean. In the stillness of her own heart, not appearing to those near her to be other than a quiet listener, her soul and she entered into compact with the

one who had given himself for the world ; and she gave herself to the service of helping that poor disordered world back to its rightful King. *The World for Christ.* Nothing less than that could be her aim ever again. Think of it, Christian women ! What an aim ! I wonder much whether the bells of heaven did not ring, and the angels shout a special anthem for her sake. Not perhaps that she could do so very much for the King, but, because in making this tender and solemn consecration, this little immortal, whom the King loved, had done so very much for herself ; had taken such long strides toward her eternity of joy.

Well, the reports were over, and there was work going on which recalled the

little roving mind to listen. Somebody was reading; a woman whose face held her with its strength and its purity, though, remember, she herself had not the least idea *why* it held her. The title of the paper was the first thing that arrested her attention: Did not it fit in with her thoughts? "*All I Am, and all I Have.*" Then she listened; there was need for listening, for the thoughts were personal. "My sisters," said the clear, tender voice, "let us tarry among these hallowed scenes, while we each answer the question: How much owest thou? What relation does Calvary hold to what we *once* were? What we *now* are? What we have?" Startling questions to our little friend. Had she ever realized for an hour in her life that

Calvary had really anything to do with what she was, and had? "Ye are not your own," said the reader, "for ye are bought with a price; Calvary tells us what that price was." And instinctively Mrs. Harper's eyes sought the cross and the sentence: "Christ for the world." "And as we try to estimate it, we can only say, with tearful gratitude, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.'"

"Yes," said the listening soul; "I say it; I am his." Then she set herself to the work of discovering, through the agency of that paper, what the confession involved. She was not left in doubt; it was a clear-cut, logical net-work of inevitable conclusions, needing not the closing sentence: "So whether we have been intrusted with five pounds or one

pound, the whole must be used for Him before we can enter into the joy of our Lord," to enable little Mrs. Harper to see that the phrase "all I am, and all I have," meant literally *all*.

It will not do for us to follow our little lady through all the changing excitements and experiences of that afternoon. They were too varied, and started too many trains of thought and purpose, to wait to lay them before you. Suffice it to say that by the time the closing hymn was sung, among the resolves of the hour stood out prominently two. First, that she would never be again the sort of woman that the morning had found her; and second, that Harry should go to the mass-meeting that evening. She longed, too, for information.

“Who are all those ladies on the platform?” she asked eagerly of the lady by whom she had been seated.

“Those? Why, they are the officers; the President and Vice-Presidents and Secretaries, you know.”

No, Mrs. Harry did not know: and these non-committal ladies were determined not to afford her information. She tried again.

“Are there any missionaries among them?”

“Oh, yes; that lady with the clear, ringing voice, who answered questions and spoke about the flowers, she is a returned missionary from Persia. Oh, you must hear her; she is splendid; she speaks to-night. Will you be out to-night?”

"Yes," said Mrs. Harry, confidently. Then a memory of her old home stirring within her: "Are there any here from Boston?"

"Oh, no, I presume not; this is the Board of the Northwest, you know."

And Mrs. Harry nodded, not her assent, but her satisfaction that at last she knew thus much: it was the Board of the Northwest. Behold her two hours later, in all the beauty of eagerness, a very wide-awake woman, attempting to detail to Harry certain of the day's experiences.

"Oh, Harry! you must excuse the street dress, for once, because you see I want to go out right after dinner. I want you to take me to the mass-meeting; it is at the First Congregational

Church. Oh, Harry, such a day! I have so much to tell you. Will you take me to-night?

"To a mass-meeting? What is it for?"

"Well, I don't know all the details, but there is to be an address by a returned missionary, and, oh, ever so many good things."

"Returned missionaries are most always rather dull parties, my little woman."

"Well, this one isn't dull; she's just as bright—oh, Harry, you can't think how bright, and *so* interesting."

"*She!* You don't say a woman is going to speak;" and the young husband held up his hands in real, or pretended horror. "My dear child, is it

possible that you have been to a Woman's Rights Convention to-day?"

"No," began Mrs. Harry, indignantly; "I," then she hesitated; "the fact is, Harry, I don't quite know where I have been; I asked the ladies, but they took it for granted that I knew so much that they didn't give me a bit of information, hardly; it is the Board of the Northwest, whatever that means. I only know it is a company of Christian women; they are just as earnest as they can be, and just as delightful; so cordial, Harry; and I feel as if I knew some of them real well; and I haven't been lonely a minute to-day, the first day since I have stayed all alone in this city.

"Poor little, lonely mousie," interpolated her husband, drawing her to him,

as she went on, eagerly: "and, Harry, they are not thinking about *rights* at all; I guess they have the right that they want most, the right to belong to Jesus Christ, and help gather the world for him; that is their motto: '*The World for Christ,*' and they are praying and giving and planning all about that; and, Harry, I want to belong; I feel in my heart that I *must* be one of them. I know some of the ladies live here, for I recognized some that we have seen in church, and they are ladies who can help me, and I know I have it in me to be one of them."

"Oh, little woman! Is she going to desert her husband, and go on a platform and wear short dresses, and cut off her hair and travel and make speeches?"

“ Now, Harry, don't be absurd ; I am in earnest ; they don't wear any shorter dresses than I do, or any different dresses ; they looked as nice as any people could ; and they wore their hair arranged just as other ladies do, and they didn't make you think of themselves at all, but of their *work* and their aims ; and I know, Harry, that I *am* one of them. A lady read a paper, the title of which was : ‘ *All I Am, and all I Have.* ’ It was beautiful and right, too ; and I feel sure I can put my name to it. I'm not much of anything, and I haven't anything, anyway ; but you have, Harry, and you give a great deal of it to me, and then it is mine, I suppose.”

There was a sudden, half-startled movement on the part of the husband, then

he drew his bride still closer to him, and said, with a voice that tried to be playful, but had a background of earnestness in it:

“All you are and all you *have* belong to me, little wife; you gave yourself to me, utterly; I will have no taking back.”

She shook her head. “No, Harry, no; we belong first, you and I both, to the Lord Jesus Christ; he bought us, you know; and, oh, to-day, when I looked at the cross and thought of it all, I felt in my soul that I wasn't worth the price, and I felt that I had defrauded him of his right. Harry, I want to belong to him utterly, and I want you to belong. Oh, Harry, let us begin all over again, and be his own.”

Then was Mr. Harry Harper strangely

moved. The fair little flower that he had plucked to bloom for him had never spoken such words before; he looked at her curiously; there was a new light in her face, a fixedness of purpose that he had never noticed before. He could not quite be sure that he liked it, but he knew that, along with the strong love in his heart for her, there arose a feeling of respect that was peculiar and new. He was not hard to persuade to attend that mass-meeting. Now I would that you could all attend it with him. If you could have listened to the words he heard that night, and joined in the hymns, and bowed your heart in the prayers as he did, you would have better understood how the service penetrated through the accumulated rust of years

of half service, or of almost total neglect, and thrilled him.

Little Mrs. Harper was eager, alert, watchful, but happy; she had had, not so much a conflict, as an awakening that day; she had felt the strength of the solid rock on which her feet were resting; she had resolved to tread firmly, and to, as she tersely expressed it, "belong." There was no conflict with her; the next point was to get Harry, so she should be sure of ever walking by his side, and she watched the varying play of emotion on his face, and now and again the drooping of his eyes, with keen interest and desire.

CHAPTER IV.

ENLISTED.

THE way some was taken almost in silence, and I do not propose to tell you of the hour which they spent together, directly the privacy of their own room was gained; only this, when the young wife said:

“Harry, here is the Bible that papa gave us, you know; you read in it, and then let us kneel down and pray together, and begin all over, just as though this was our first night in our home together.

We haven't done right, Harry; I have had a troubled sort of feeling about it, but now I am sure; and the way is to begin *now*."

Harry, though his face flushed to his very temples, and his sensitive mouth quivered, did not refuse the Bible, did not refuse to bow with his wife in prayer, and the W. P. B. F. M., in more things than one, builded better than they knew that day: for besides building for the future a building for the Master, the magnitude of which no tongue can tell until the story of all time is told before the throne, they were the direct instruments in the building of a family altar that night, which shall decay only when the voices of the two who joined before it are called on to offer the more perfect,

acceptable service, when their eyes shall see the King in his beauty.

Swift fingers, the next day, made the street toilet of Mrs. Harry Harper. It was not that she was less neatly dressed, it was simply that she felt the need for haste; there was business of importance calling her. She was going to the missionary meeting; there was no time to loiter over toilets. In her delicate gold-bound pocket-book there shone certain goodly sized gold pieces, which she meant to spend that very day, and her eyes were shining with joy as she beheld them, for had not Harry said that morning, as he kissed her good-by:

“See here, wife, those ladies will be taking up a collection, or something of the sort, for the cause to-day; you give

these for you and me; and, darling, I know you are right in this matter; we will begin again. I am entirely willing that you should 'belong,' as you call it, to that work; enlist wherever you choose to-day, and we will help the work together; and when you want money let me know; we will have a fund, dear, for the Board of the Northwest, or whatever Board you belong to."

Is it strange that her fingers flew fast and her eyes shone? What heard she that day? Ah, me! if she should undertake to tell you, you would not get home in time for rest to-night! It was a white day to her. It teemed with revelations of what the Christian world had done, was doing, wanted to do; nay, more than that, *meant* to do. It had a thank-offering hour,

and the gold pieces went up to the platform, sent by one thankful heart; and yet there were offerings presented that day, from homes where the fingers who used to treasure the bits of silver had gone up to God, thereby making the silver as precious as diamonds, and yet given for the Master, that Mrs. Harry Harper bowed her head and wept over the meagreness of *her* offering as viewed in God's sight, and resolved, with all the earnestness of her awakened heart, that her well-filled purse should assuredly *belong* hereafter.

There were little touches of the practical; strong hints that gave her an idea what to do, and how to do it. "*The Power of the Littles*" was the title of one paper, to which she listened eagerly; she felt very

little in her own eyes ; was there possibly a power in her life that could be used, somewhere, somehow, for His service? Listening to the paper, with glowing cheeks and strongly throbbing heart, she came to the conclusion, shared by many another, that really there *were* no littles ; that it was possible to freight every action full of power for God. There was a young ladies' mission meeting that led this woman, who had so recently emerged from young ladyhood, to look back with a sigh and a regretful questioning: "I wonder why nobody ever tried to interest me in anything of this kind? Seems to me I would have been glad to have been shown the way." There was a communion service to which this fair young novice in the Christian life will always

look back on, as the day when she had first glimpses of what this memorial service might mean to the soul in Christ. There was an evening reception which Harry attended with her, during which time they made more acquaintances in the Church of Christ than they had done in the years previous.

“So glad to see you here,” said one earnest-faced, bright-voiced woman, whom they had noticed frequently in the church into which they had most often floated. “I have noticed you in attendance both days; I am so glad; someway it surprised me a little; I was not aware that you were specially interested in missions.”

“I never was,” frankly answered Mrs. Harper, with a conscious little laugh; “nobody ever said anything to me about

being interested, and I never thought of it."

Then the good woman who had addressed her exchanged glances with another good woman who was listening, and it is possible that their consciences reminded them they had let this fair little butterfly hover about them a good while, without seeking to have her interested in anything. They made haste to recover lost ground.

"Oh, well, we shall be sure to say enough to each other on this subject after this. I see you are one of us," with an inclination toward the badge; "what society do you represent?"

Then little Mrs. Harper flushed, but answered, still smiling:

"I am here under false pretenses; I don't belong anywhere. I came to the

meeting and a lady mistook me for one of you and pinned on my badge in haste before I could protest, and I became so attached to the mysterious little letters that I could not feel willing to give it up." And she looked tenderly down at the fair white ribbon, fastened to her chain.

Prompt action was desirable now.

"Oh, that was all right; only you should 'belong,' of course. Don't you attend our church, the Fourth? I have seen you there."

"As often as anywhere," Mrs. Harper explained; "they had not placed their letters in any church as yet."

"Well, you will join our society, won't you? Here's our Secretary; Mrs. Palmer, wait a minute; where is your pledge card? Mrs. Harper, will you sign?"

A few rapid words of explanation, a few delicate strokes made with the proffered pencil, and Mrs. Harry Harper was one of them at last, in orthodox fashion.

All this was only a year ago. But the other day, in a sister city, I was one of a party of ladies, a listener to a conversation, extracts of which you may like to hear.

“What an indefatigable worker for missions Mrs. Harry Harper is, isn't she? Did you ever see any one who went into it, heart and soul, as she does?”

This from one of the group. There was prompt assent.

“She is really wonderful,” explained another: “her interest never seems to flag, and she is just as ready with her purse as she is with her tongue and hands

and feet. I really envy the Fourth Church; their society leads off every time, and they are certainly less strong financially, than our church. It is just because Mrs. Harper keeps them stirred up all the time. They don't have a chance to settle into indifference. I wonder how the Fourth Church got hold of her?"

Then another voice: "Well Mrs. Harper is peculiarly situated; she is boarding, she has no family cares or duties, she is wealthy, and her husband is entirely in sympathy with her. Why shouldn't she give time and money?"

Still another: "That is all true; but then, how many women do you know who have leisure and wealth, and who yet give next to nothing for missions?"

Then the subject branched off.

“What do you think about these annual gatherings? It seems to me they take a good deal of time and strength and money, and don't pay very well. What is the use of them, anyway? The money that they cost might be saved for missions. They seem to me just a selfish sort of gathering for the sake of having a good time. I never attended one yet and I don't believe I ever shall.”

She need hardly have added that last; it was so apparent that the well-meaning woman had starved herself of all the spiritual and mental growth connected with such gatherings. She was too sincere to have made it fair to quote to her the historic words: “Why

was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." Yet despite the charity which endureth all things, and thinketh no evil, the old story of the broken alabaster box floated through my mind; but the practical woman went on:

"Now, I believe in missions as much as anybody; and I believe in sacrificing for them, and I say, stay at home and do it. I don't know many people who seem to me to be thoroughly in earnest about these things; they just play at it. If we had a dozen more women like Mrs. Harper we might almost evangelize the world ourselves in a lit-

tle while; but where will you find another like her?"

"I'll venture to say she is going to the spring meeting," said one of the ladies, in a positive voice.

"Well, now, I don't believe she is; I believe she is too thoroughly interested to waste her time or money."

"Hush!" said one of the group, in warning tone; "here comes Mrs. Harper; you can have a chance to ask her, if you choose."

This suggestion met with instant approval, and was carried into effect as soon after the first greetings as possible. How fair the little wife looked in her tasteful dress, with her bright face aglow with feeling.

"Yes, indeed!" she said, eagerly. "I

can not think of anything short of an absolute duty that would hold me away from the meeting. Why, do you know, before that gathering, a year ago, I never had thought of the heathen or the missionaries twice in my life! I was converted there, or awakened, or something. I go to that meeting as one would go back to a mile-stone which marked a sacred memory. I have almost been likening it to the yearly feast to which the people used to go up when the Master was here; and I feel a little like those who said to each other: 'What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?' Only — no, it is different, for I *know* he will be there. Oh, yes, I'm going. How I wish every Christian woman in the world could go."




SOMETHING MUST BE DONE

THE HARRISVILLE YOUNG LADIES' BAND.

CHAPTER I.

SOMETHING MUST BE DONE.

T was having a weary struggle for existence. A spasm of missionary zeal had swept over the place, and while the influence lasted, certain young ladies, with the aid and under the spell of an eloquent lady who came to them from the parent society, had organized a "branch" which now, in only the third

month of its existence was in serious danger of withering. They had struggled bravely, those few; had heroically given up Saturday afternoon once a month to the effort; had gathered themselves into a corner of the church which was pleasant enough of a Sabbath morning, with the great congregation gathering in, but which had an indescribably dreary appearance to the five or six who hovered over the register, of a Saturday afternoon, and wished that the sexton would make more fire, or that they had a pleasanter place to meet, or that *something* could be done to make missionary efforts less dreary. The President, with the best intentions in the world, did not understand how to conduct a Young Ladies' Band. She selected and carefully read

a chapter in the Bible; she was a fair reader; but, not being used to mission work, and not having been trained, it did not seem to occur to her that certain portions of the Bible might be better suited to these meetings than certain others; so her choice had been governed only by the length of the chapter. She always chose a long one, because she knew that she could read, and she always believed that she could not talk. Then oh! it is a pity, and "pity 'tis, 'tis true;" I can hardly find words in which to explain to you the tremendous force of will and the outlay of moral courage which it required for this young President to kneel down before her half-dozen companions and offer prayer!

There were times when she felt that to have bravely donned a soldier's uniform and march boldly into the thick of battle, could surely be nothing to compare with this. Yet she did it, with trembling lips and throbbing heart, and low murmured words that even the one kneeling beside her could not, sometimes, catch; yet, be it recorded, *she did it*. As for singing, they could not compass that. Five voices in the choir made their music on Sabbath day something to be enjoyed, but though those five voices belonged, three of them to ladies, two of them to church-members, they had not hitherto been persuaded to give their presence to this Young Ladies' Band.

One of them hadn't time; she had

time, it is true, for calls, and rides, and sociables, and festivals, and shopping, but then these were necessary occupations; they consumed *all* the time, leaving none for minor matters. One of them was not a Christian, and produced it as an unanswerable excuse for not being interested in any scheme pertaining to the cause of Christ, and one of them "didn't believe in foreign missions, any way." So, as I said, the singing in the Harrisville Young Ladies' Band was of necessity omitted. Several of the members could sing, it is true, when a strong reliable voice led the way, but the process of starting a tune was too formidable even to be thought of.

They had undertaken to have papers prepared on China and Japan and other

missionary countries; and those appointed had faithfully accomplished their task and compiled a formidable list of statistics; the difficulty being that those who listened or appeared to listen, cared little or nothing about the population and productions of the country, nor thought it mattered how many years it was since certain missionaries went there nor how long they were in acquiring the language. A vital interest in the cause was of course the mainspring lacking. So the members dwindled; the seven or eight became five or six; always including the heroic President. One sunny Saturday afternoon, which was yet cold and chill in the great church, by reason of the fact that the sexton concluded to use sun heat instead of furnace heat, and yet

avoided the opening of a single blind until long after the sun had moved away from that quarter, the discouragement of these good-intentioned few reached its culminating point. It transpired that at the proper hour for meeting, there were three shivering damsels who looked drearily at each other. These were the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Harrisville Young Ladies' Band, or Branch, as they more often called themselves.

"What a branch!" ejaculated the Secretary, as her eye rested on the name, written with careful flourishes in the great blank book before her; then she laughed; then the President and the Secretary laughed. They would all much rather have cried, if that would not have

made the matter still more embarrassing. They were all honestly disappointed.

“What *are* we going to do?” queried the Secretary; in a discouraged tone. “Just think of making a minute of three people at the last meeting!”

“And thirty cents set down in the Treasurer’s report!” chimed in the Treasurer; “thirty cents given in the month of February by the Harrisville Young Ladies’ Band for the cause of missions!”

Then the President with tremendous energy of tone and manner, “*Something* must be done!”

“What?” said both of her companions, in a breath, and, by way of answer, that President let her copies of *Woman’s Work* and *Foreign Missionary* slip un-

heeded, to the floor, and said: "Let us pray!" This astonished the girls. They had not supposed that it was worth while to pray; when only three persons were present, and they all officers. But the young president prayed as though she felt that they had reached the extremity of their wisdom, and now, indeed, must depend on the Lord. Somehow, her intensity of feeling made her less afraid than usual. I do not know that, in the strict sense of the word, she could have been said to pray for missions. Rather, she prayed for the Harrisville Young Ladies' Band. Not by name; she even forgot that she belonged to that imposing body; was indeed the presiding officer of it; and almost before she realized where she was, or what she represent-

ed, she found herself praying as she did in her little room at home, for "*the girls.*"

The effect of this prayer was echoed by each voice as they arose from their knees.

"*Now, girls, we certainly must do something.*"

CHAPTER II.

SOME NEW IDEAS.

THEN they went home to think about it. Later in the day, the same influence, intensifying with every passing moment, pervaded the heart of the President, Miss Fannie Archer, as she sat in her father's parlor, elbows resting on the small table before her, and hands thrust into the frizzes of her brown hair. She echoed her thoughts aloud and vehemently: "Something must be done. Charlie, see here!"

Charlie was a cousin, a young student of theology, and a guest in the house. He came from the library near at hand.

“Well, what is needing my immediate supervision?”

“I want to talk to you about our young society. You are interested in missions, or ought to be. What can we do about our Young Ladies' Branch? It is just a hopeless drag.”

“Withered, eh? I expected as much.”

“Now, *why* did you expect it?” a little impatient frown on the fair face. “You think we girls are not in earnest at all; and I tell you we were; we meant to do the best we could, and did; and it don't work, and it *won't* work; I don't see how it is our fault.”

“*I* don't say it is; it is natural sequence,

though, from the result of that sort of management.”

“What sort of management? We conducted the meetings just as others do. Just what do you mean by that?”

“Oh, all that I mean is a very old statement, for the truth of which a greater than I is responsible: ‘the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.’”

“I don’t see the application.”

“Well, now,” he said, drawing a chair in front of her, and looking straight into the eyes of his fair cousin, “let us look at the matter. If I were suddenly called upon to make an addition to the statement just quoted, which would fit the present day, I think I should say: ‘the children of light are wiser about everything else that can be

thought of, than they are about matters that pertain to religion. How, for instance, did you manage that festival in which you were interested last fall?"

"Well," said Miss Fannie, "we—why, we worked it up."

"Exactly so. You had schemes and plans and committees enough to manage a World's Fair; and rehearsals and committee meetings, and all sorts of contrivances, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Fannie, letting her mind wander dreamily back among the doings of the past; "there was no end of work connected with that festival."

"So I suspect. The trouble with this branch of yours, I suspect, is that it is not tended and weeded and watered enough."

"Charlie, do drop metaphor, and talk

plain common sense. If you know any thing that we can do to awaken an interest in our band, I wish you would tell me; though I am sure I don't see what *you* should know about missions."

"I know less about missions than I do about any other one thing that at present interests the sensible portion of the world, I do believe; and, according to the present rates of management, I am really afraid it will be a long while before I know any more, but I do profess to have a few grains of common sense, and it is about that very article, or the want of it, that I am talking at this moment."

"Will you enlighten me?"

"Why, Fannie, I think I *have*. I say, how do you manage everything else? Look at that church sociable which was in

your house. How many times did I escort you to places so that you could plan for it? How many times did I hear the sentence: "Say, girls, how shall we entertain people when we get them there?" And, "What shall we do about music? We must have some fine music." And, "Don't you think it would be nice to have a museum of paintings or carvings, or some curious or interesting things for people to look at, to start conversation, you know; some people don't know how to talk, unless they have something to talk about."

Whereupon Fannie laughed, "I remember that sentence, Charlie: you said it yourself."

"Very well; then I contributed one important item to the general fund; but I

hope you see the application. What have you done to entertain people when you got them to your band meetings? ”

“ They don't come to be entertained, ” interrupted Fannie.

“ Suppose they had, how much entertainment would they have received? How much pains do you take with your music? How extensive a literary programme have you? How much thought do you give to the matter beforehand? How much wiser are those who attend than they were before? How much more deeply impressed are they with the importance of missions than they were before they shivered through that hour in the northwest corner of the church !

“ Then another point: Just suppose for a minute, if you can suppose anything

so ridiculous, that when you got up that fair, over which you were busy day and night for three months, the public had heard no more about it than the simple announcement to those who happened to be in the church, that the young ladies' fair would be held next Saturday afternoon as usual in the church at 3 o'clock, and not another syllable lisped concerning it until Saturday afternoon came. How large a number would you have had?"

"Bless me! Haven't I a vivid recollection of being stopped by young ladies on every street corner, and six times between each corner, to receive a cordial, in fact a very pressing invitation to the fair! We all knew about that, I assure you, and were not in danger of forgetting it. Moreover, it isn't six weeks since I heard a

party of young ladies voting vigorously for a simple tea at the sewing circle because it relieved the stiffness and made every one feel more social and cheery. "The simple question is, Why don't you as a Branch, try some of these devices to set your leaves and buds to growing?"

"But Charlie, think what a humiliating admission to have to make, that our Christian young ladies have to be coaxed and beguiled in that way into having an interest in missionary work! They ought to be glad of a chance to help the cause."

"My dear, logical young cousin, is there any rule which makes such a proceeding humiliating for mission bands, and perfectly wise and desirable for church fairs and sociables and festi-

vals? People ought to be glad of the chance of paying church debts, and upholstering pews, and getting new organs, and hymn-books, and Sabbath-school library-books, and supporting the interests of the Church generally; but the sad fact remains that they have to be invited and entertained, and fed, and sought after, and coaxed, or they will not come."

"Well, we might do something of the sort I suppose: only there is very little time in these short afternoons, and as for having tea, it seems as though it would be rather dull, just us girls."

"Why should it be limited to just 'us girls?' Isn't there any place in the enterprise for 'us boys?' It strikes me that it would not injure us in the least to get some sort of an idea of what the church is doing

in this line, and I don't know how we are ever to get it, unless those who are posted in these matters take us in hand. What special harm would there be in your occasionally inviting us to join you, and thrive together?"

Then was Miss Fannie amazed at the audacity of the idea. "How could we?" she said indignantly. "We belong to the Young Ladies' Branch, and are called the Young Ladies' *Band!* But, then, I don't see that that need make any difference; we needn't ask the young gentlemen for money: they might just meet to enjoy the exercises and the music and see us home, and, well," said Miss Fannie, after a moment's hesitation, "have a good time together. There is no use in talking, now; it *is* a good deal pleasanter for the girls and

boys to meet together and entertain each other than it is to be by ourselves."

"Of course it is," rejoined Cousin Charlie, with the relish of one who fully accepted the proposition. "Why, in the name of common sense, shouldn't it be? We are brothers and cousins and friends, and we enjoy each other's society elsewhere: why need we be left out in the cold in this matter of missions? I appreciate the business part of it, a separate organization and all that, and your business matters might be conducted before we arrived, and as to the money, of course we wouldn't force any of *ours* upon you;" this with a twinkle of eyes that indicated his evident relish of *this* position. "There is no telling how soon we might be roused to forming a money organization of our own ;

but until then, why couldn't we be admitted to the social part, at least? "

Then silence took possession of that little parlor for a few minutes. Miss Fannie disarranged her frizzes worse than before, and the two furrows in her forehead told that she was thinking hard.

"There is one trouble in the way," she said, at last, speaking hesitatingly; "I don't believe we girls could possibly manage the religious exercises before outsiders."

"Well?" Charlie said, after a thoughtful pause. "I'll admit that it is a humiliating thing that we who are as intimate in regard to every other subject as friends well can be, are afraid to talk about Christ and heaven together, or to speak to our best friend in the presence of our other

friends. I hope the time will come for a reform in that matter. I hope to live to see the day when it will be as natural for girls and boys to pray before each other as it is now to *talk*.

“ But we must take the world, in part, as we find it, and until we can move wisely in an advance, how would it do to let us come in late, in time to pass the cake and coffee and see you safely home? I know it is hard on a fellow to make him provide a niche for himself, but I seem driven to it.”

“ Charlie,” said Miss Fannie, under a sudden impulse of frankness, and after another pause, “you are a provoking fellow, sometimes, and you have hinted some real hateful things during this very talk.”

At the same time, I'll own that you have given me some new ideas, and I may work them up."

"Thank you," was the said Charlie's courteous reply, accompanied by an unnecessarily low bow. "The hope of seeing a new idea developed once more repays me for all the sacrifice of personal ease and enjoyment that I have made."

CHAPTER III.

A NEW ORDER OF THINGS.



THUS began the new order of things in the Harrisville Young Ladies' Band. The very next Monday there was a self-constituted committee of three, being the aforesaid officers of the band, who met to discuss ways and means. Thereafter the younger portion of Harrisville pertaining to the First Church was in a flutter. Invitations were out on the daintiest of note paper, inviting every young gentleman and every young lady to the next meeting of

the Young Ladies' Band, to be held at the house of Mr. Samuel Marvyn; tea at seven. "What is this Young Ladies' Band?" said the young ladies to each other, who had heard the regular announcement of the band meeting, or at least sat under its announcement from the pulpit for every third Saturday in the month during many months. Now this cream-tinted note aroused their interest.

"This is something new under the sun, isn't it?" said the gentlemen, one to another; and straightway some of them reflected that they ought to know more about missions they supposed. At least, they would go; that much encouragement to the cause they would certainly give. Neither did the matter stop with this single invitation. Cousin Charlie had occasion

to discover before the week was past, that something at least equally as important as a church fair was in progress. At every corner, in every street-car, at the church-door, in short, wherever he met a young lady, he was liable to be greeted with the interrogation: "We shall see you at the band meeting, I hope?" or, "We are expecting you to help us on Thursday!" or, "Shall you go to the band meeting, Mr. Archer" according to the degree of intimacy between the parties. Of course, being courteously invited to a young peoples' gathering, the young people courteously responded, and on Thursday by five o'clock the young ladies who gathered in Mr. Marvyn's parlors would have astonished the northwest corner of the church. Neither had en-

ergy exhausted itself in invitations. A careful programme had been arranged and was presented. It was wonderful how many young ladies had been found to *do*, so soon as something definite and tangible had been given them to do. The Misses Heber would sing, of *course* they would. Why not? They had voices like birds, and loved to sing as well as ever birds can, and they sang that evening. Miss Lillie Brooks could, and would, and *did*, recite as sweet a missionary poem as ever thrilled an audience. Neither was the devotional portion of the hour forgotten. The President's heart beat fast, it is true, and her cheeks were red, yet she had earnestly counted the cost, and determined not only to give her *voice* to the

cause but to make all the young ladies help her, so she distributed the slips of paper, containing each a Bible verse, over whose selection and careful writing she and Cousin Charlie had spent several evenings, and there followed a well-chosen and impressive Bible reading, helped by some grand voices which were unused to reading Bible verses, not so much because they were unwilling to read them as because no one had ever asked them.

Then the President prayed: then there followed her in prayer, little Susie Scoville, much younger than any of the others, but an earnest, consecrated little Christian, who had months before determined to do, always, *what she could*, and who, when the President asked her

privately, answered, with glowing cheeks and doubtful voice: "Oh, Miss Fannie! I'll try." Then there followed her, sweet, fair, timid, Emma Nelson, whom nobody ever thought would be willing to pray in public, but something in the earnest voice and simple words of the girl kneeling beside her, so much younger than herself, nerved *her* voice to try. And so, this became a pleasant part of the afternoon, despite all their fears and tremblings. Then the gentlemen began to honor their invitations and came, in cheery groups, fresh from the outside world, banishing all formality and stiffness by the very bustle of their coming. Then cups of coffee and sandwiches, simple, easily prepared, and easily served, seemed to bring with

them a full tide of talk, and destroy the last vestige of formality. Nor was this the entire programme. No sooner was the debris of the supper cleared away, when an exercise, so carefully planned and prepared that it had all the grace of an impromptu about it, was presented for the entertainment of the guests. It was nothing more formidable than a series of questions and answers, the questions appearing to come from any person who happened to think of one that she desired to ask, and the answers appearing to emanate from those who happened to be informed. Simple, natural questions, as for instance: Miss Laura Proctor said suddenly, and apparently without a shadow of premeditation, "This is quite

a large band meeting, isn't it? When were young ladies' bands first formed? Does any one know?" And one who knew gave most informally the answer. "I wonder if they have succeeded in raising much money?" questioned another. "Oh, yes," said another: "why, I read only yesterday, that——" and then followed some delightful figures. "What are they doing with the money? Is it used for any special work?" queried another, and the answer was prompt from a voice across the room. "What is the use of missions, anyway?" said a skeptically inclined young lady; "hardly any of the heathen are converted after all." The answer to that was simple and conclusive, and the talk went on. One young lady told of what

she had read that Mrs. Mateer said last month.

“Who is Mrs. Mateer anyway?” asked a girl who would not have dared to ask it, had the question not been on her carefully studied paper, lest she might thereby have exposed her ignorance.

“Why, she is a missionary in China,” was replied, and then there followed little touches of her peculiarly interesting work, called out by question and answer. You see the point; I wish you could have been there to have heard how well it was managed, and how thoroughly the young ladies themselves became interested in the talk. Several of the gentlemen fell so readily into the trap that they produced questions from the

impulse of the moment, which taxed Fannie Archer's wits to the utmost, and would once have embarrassed her utterly had not there flashed over her the idea of appealing to Cousin Charlie for information, and in the wicked satisfaction which she felt in seeing him obliged to say, "*I really do not know,*" she regained her composure. But the first general meeting of the Harrisville Young Ladies' Band was a success. Neither was there danger of that portion of the branch withering soon. A taste of success made the leaders thereof long for *success*.

Also there came, as if by accident, a special interposition of Providence to them soon after. Behold, it was announced in the Harrisville Church that

Mrs. Mateer was in this country and would address the ladies of the First Church on next Thursday afternoon. Straightway the ladies of the Band gave each other little appreciative smiles. *They* knew who Mrs. Mateer was. Some of them who a month before would hardly have known of her existence, felt posted, felt able to post others. "Oh, yes," they said, "she is a returned missionary from China; she has had a very interesting experience; you must go and hear her." And they began to feel that they knew something about what was going on in the world; and they went to the Thursday afternoon meeting; so did others; and to those who heard, and to those who heard *of* her, through those who did,

there came an inspiration in Harrisville for missions that will tell for eternity.

To-day there is no fear of blight for the buds in the Harrisville Branch. They are continually talking up that band. Of this fact the said Cousin Charlie has become so convinced that does there occur a moment's lull in a conversation where two or more young ladies are present, he is sure to turn with animated face, and a voice exactly simulating one of the energetic of their number, and say: "Oh, girls, what shall we do for our next Band meeting?"

What *did* they do? Oh, dear! you don't expect me to tell you?

What can a band of wide-awake, energetic, earnest-hearted, thoroughly roused young ladies do for missions? Rather what can they *not* do? I think the Har-

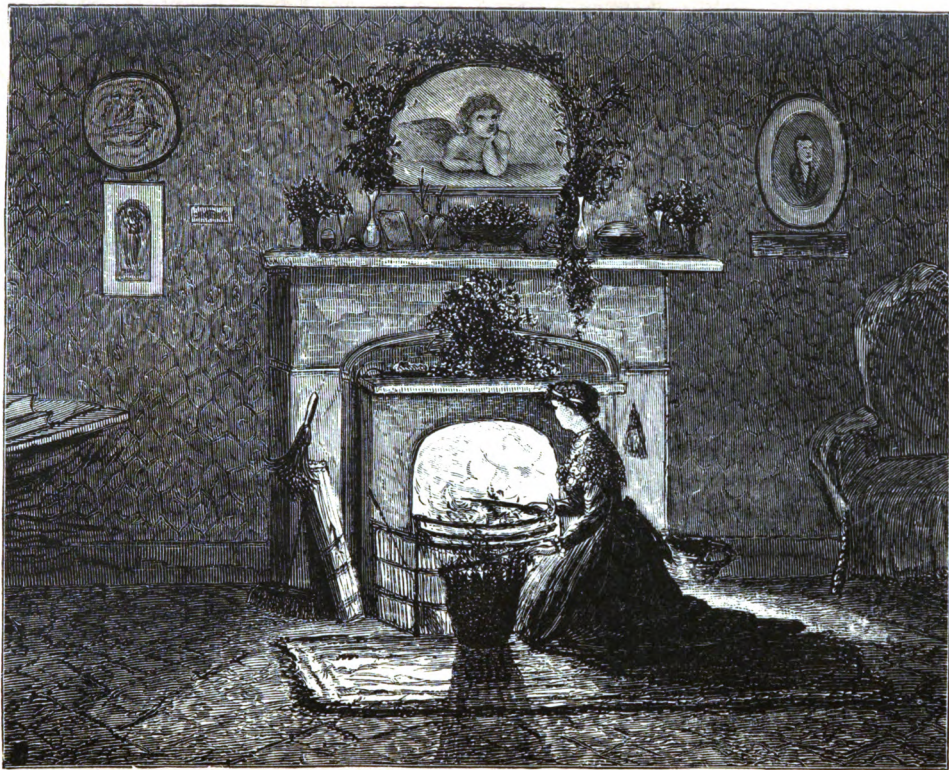
114 THE HARRISVILLE YOUNG LADIES' BAND.

rissville Band boasts the banner membership to-day. They are eager as ever. They are more earnest; the work has gone beyond the regions of entertainment; it has taken on strength and power; yet they are always struggling after *entertainment*; for there are always young men and women, new ones coming within the circle of their influence, who must be *caught* before they can be made to serve. Yet should you ask the Harrisville Young Ladies' Band to-day what they did to make their band so large and so effective, I am not sure that they would not look from one to another, slightly puzzled how to answer, there are so many *little* things to do that can not be grouped into one brief answer. Perhaps they would fall back with a laugh on that one sentence

which they never forgot: "Oh, we talked it up." Yet *I* may tell you, that there is a secret behind that secret; it was discovered when those three girls looked at each other with determined faces, that Saturday afternoon in the old church, and said "*something* must be done." Where there is a will, there is a way. Is that it? Ah, there is yet a secret behind that secret, for the force of strong wills was brought to bear upon this subject only, when, laying aside her timidity, and her shrinking, and her poor attempts at guiding, Fanny Archer let book and pride slip from her that afternoon and said with full heart: "*Let us pray.*" "In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me, and brought me out into a large place."

There is strong will power in the

Harrisville Band; there is an eager looking out for the little things that will help; there is a wisdom like unto that which the children of this world use when they mean to succeed, and there is a consecration of time and strength and pride, all on the altar; and the buds and blossoms of that branch, nurtured as they are under the shadow of the true vine, shall bear fruit. "They shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."




MRS. DUNIAP'S PARLOR.

MRS. DUNLAP'S COMMENTARY.

CHAPTER I.

MONDAY MORNING NERVES.

T was nine o'clock in the sultry heat of an August morning. One of those breathless mornings, when leaves and grasses hang listlessly in the quiet air, too much exhausted to wave or sparkle. When grasshoppers, and locusts and bees and whatever else of insect kind can make a buzzing droning

noise to add to the sense of heat, are alert and eager.

In Mrs. Dunlap's usually cool kitchen there was, on this particular morning, a passable representation of the fiery furnace. The great cook stove glowed, the fire within roaring and snapping in a manner that made one feel as if the heat increased every minute. The table near the sink, and indeed the sink itself, were piled with sticky dishes of all shapes and sizes, and the flies buzzed exasperatingly around the weary dishwasher, who was trying to reduce the mass to order.

The rows of shining cans, sealed and cooling on the table near the west window, and the rows of shining cans on the table near it, waiting to be filled, to-

gether with a certain delicious odor which oozed up continually from the covered dish on the stove, would have informed even the comparatively uninitiated that the solemn business of fruit canning was in process in that kitchen. *Monday* morning too. With the strange perversity — not to say stupidity — occasionally showing itself in the masculine mind, Mr. Dunlap had appeared very late on Saturday evening, followed by a man bearing an immense basket of peaches, of just the right degree of hardness for canning, bought because they were so nice, and large, and perfect, and so remarkably cheap! ignoring entirely the two startling facts, that the next day was to be Sunday, and the day following that was to be Monday! This

fact proves conclusively to every woman in existence, that Mr. Dunlap was not designed by nature for a housekeeper. Well, the practical results of his forethought had been, late paring of peaches, away into the last hours of Saturday night, almost fringing on the edge of Sunday morning; for certain were found, even among these fair ones which would not "*keep*" until Monday — then a very early rising on Monday, to complete the nerve-trying process of peach paring; then, ominous frowns on Mrs. Dunlap's face, because the Saturday night peaches had "turned dark!" not that their flavor was affected, but then, every housekeeper knew that they wouldn't look so well as those which were canned as soon as pared. "Just like a man!" Mrs. Dunlap

murmured, as she wiped the perspiration from her forehead, and gloomily surveyed the dark juice. And the frown deepened.

“Rub-a-dub-dub!” sounded from the back kitchen, where Hannah washed. Splash! went the soapy dish water over the sticky dishes. Sizzle! went the syrup on the stove, hinting continually of a determination to boil over unless it was vigilantly watched.

“There is too much fire!” said Mrs. Dunlap in her most irritated tone; but surely the fault was her own; had she not, with housewifely thrift determined that such a good fire as that should not be allowed to run to waste in the region of the oven, so the baking which had usually to wait until Tuesday, came in

for its full share of nerves to-day. It was an economy of time as well, for since Mrs. Dunlap must needs be in the kitchen all the morning, why should she not attend to her nice baking at the same time? All very well; only it has been demonstrated that time and temper can not always be economized together.

So she was warm, and she was weary, and a dozen little exasperating things had already happened, before Mattie let the large dish that she was rinsing, slip from her soapy fingers, and land in many pieces on the floor.

“Why, Mattie Marshall!” exclaimed the mistress—and those who knew her natural tone would have been justified in starting at the sharpness of this one. “What *have* you broken now! My fruit

dish!" Oh, the concentration of horror in this tone! "How is it possible that you could have been so fearfully careless! and you knew that I valued that dish more than anything that I had in the world." (Think of valuing a fruit dish above everything in the world!) Mrs. Dunlap's voice had in it that which said: "You *know* you did it on purpose. It was nothing but premeditated malice." I have not told you all that she said. It would be difficult. On a stifling August morning, in a stifling kitchen, when one's nerves are rasped to the boiling point, one can talk very fast, and say a great deal that sounds badly put on paper. This, Mrs. Dunlap did. Moreover, the longer she talked the more vexed with herself did she

grow, to think that she could not get away from the trying subject; also she grew warmer every minute, and, in her zeal over the broken dish, the watchful syrup on the stove gained a victory, and bubbled triumphantly over, making a stifling smell of burnt sugar in the air. Then came Eva from the pantry, her hands sticky with flour which she had been manipulating, and essaying to help she seized upon the bubbling syrup and shook a lump or two of flour into the boiling mass. "There now!" said Mrs. Dunlap, "see what *you* have done! These peaches will not look ugly enough, so you must come and streak them with flour! I do wish you would go back to your work; when I need your help I will call for it. Such

helpers as I have! I declare it is enough to provoke a saint."

And certainly to see her now with her flushed face and angry eyes, no one would have mistaken Mrs. Dunlap for a saint; so perhaps she was more than justified. The effect of her words was instantaneous. Miss Eva went back to her pantry and her pie, the glow on her cheeks and the sparkle in her eyes, not being additions to her face. It was hard when she had attempted to help to be greeted with such words as these, especially before Mattie.

"As if I were a little child!" she said, indignantly, tossing back her head, and resolving that the tears gathering in her eyes should be seen by no one. This Mattie was not exactly a hired servant,

but a neighbor's daughter, a poor girl, eager for an education; *so* eager for it that she was willing to earn her bread in Mrs. Dunlap's kitchen, by doing with her might the many things that her hands found to do mornings and evenings and Saturdays; to say nothing of occasional Mondays, like this one, when work was said to press so heavily that she must needs stay from school in the forenoon to help them through. Staying from school was a heavy cross for Mattie, and it was this, added to the fact that she did not deserve the imputation of carelessness, and resented the untruthful insinuation that she broke many dishes, which served to make the trials of this particular Monday almost too much for her young nerves. She pressed

her lips closely to keep the angry thoughts from bubbling into words, and she worked away rapidly, slamming the dishes just a little, and thinking her thoughts just as damaging so far as Mrs. Dunlap's influence over her was concerned, as though she had put them into words. There was a solemn and pitiful side to this morning's influence, for bright-eyed, keen-brained Mattie was Mrs. Dunlap's Sabbath scholar in the Bible class. Also, the lesson set for next Sabbath's study was one which had been familiar to Mattie's childhood; she turned to it yesterday and noticed with a pleased smile that the verses were those which she used so glibly to recite to her father in the days when she was seven; and to the girl of seventeen, those days seem in

the long gone, dreamy past. By some subtle chain of association, these verses flashed before her now, and she repeated them in undertone, enjoying to the utmost the sarcasm which she threw into her voice, as she attempted to fit them to Mrs. Dunlap's present condition.

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness!” She stole a glance just then at the black brows which bent over the scorched syrup, and laughed outright; there was such a conspicuous absence of meekness. Now, be it known, that Mrs. Dunlap's unbecoming outburst had not served to steady her nerves or calm her heart. Instead, she felt less able to bear the strain of the hour, and more hopelessly irritable

than before; why should she not? Having weakened her powers of self-control by indulgence, why should they not exhibit weakness? The undertone of words from Mattie struck with special harshness on her ear. Her voice sounded proportionately discordant. "Mattie, why do you keep up such a disagreeable muttering over your work? If you have anything to say, pray speak plainly. *Any* words however disrespectful are preferable to mutterings."

"I was simply repeating a verse of next Sabbath's lesson ma'am." It would be impossible to convey to you the degree of superciliousness expressed in Mattie's tone of voice; she knew how to be exasperating when she chose, and people most always choose, when the

occasion is specially trying. Mrs. Dunlap was slightly startled; she had not the remotest idea what next Sabbath's lesson was, but it was certainly a marvel that Mattie Marshall should be conning it over just at this moment; there was something in the words and more in the tone that ruffled her still further. "Well," she said, "there is a fitness in all things. Monday morning, over the dish-pan is hardly the time or place for studying a Bible lesson. Any sort of muttering is distasteful at such a time, even if the words *are* from the Bible."

"I thought religion fitted in everywhere," said Miss Mattie, and she tossed her handsome head and flashed her handsome eyes in a way which indicated that

she at least, had little to fit in, *anywhere*.

“Mattie,” said Mrs. Dunlap severely, “Don’t be irreverent, as well as impertinent.” Whereupon Mattie giggled. She could not help it. She could feel that she was impertinent, but the idea of irreverence struck her as funny.

“One would think she was quite elated over breaking my choicest fruit dish,” remarked Mrs. Dunlap in an injured tone to Eva, a tone which was intended for, and reached Mattie’s ears. But Eva had a grievance on her own account, and had no soothing words for her mother. As may be supposed, the trials of the hour did not lessen. Mrs. Dunlap had summoned an evil spirit to the heart of both daughter and handmaiden, to help complicate the domestic bewilderments; and

those spirits did their best. Gloom, and sharpness, and bitterness; the very antipodes of peace, and joy, and gentleness, ruled the morning. Even little Davie came in for his share of sharpness. "Do, Davie, keep out from under my feet; you are always in the way when I am specially busy; don't come into the kitchen again unless you want to be sent to bed." And Mattie listened, and muttered again: "Lots of love and joy about that. More fruit than peaches gets spoiled in the growing, I guess."

The morning waned, and the twelve o'clock dinner hour approached, and work increased, and heat increased also. At intervals the mother in this home made feeble attempts to get away from the demons of haste and irritability who seemed

to have her in control; but at best it was very feeble resistance which she gave; it presently took the form of a pudding of which the Dunlap family were quite fond, and which, owing to the amount of time and trouble and ingredients which it required, was rarely made. That imp of the kitchen who stands ready to suggest to busy, nervous people, three times as much work as they ought to undertake, whispered in Mrs. Dunlap's ear, "Why not make that pudding to-day? You have been promising it for a long time, and you can manage it, while you are waiting for other things, and it will be a sort of atonement for the sour words which you have been serving up so lavishly all the morning." No, he didn't put that last thought into such bold shape — if he had,

Mrs. Dunlap would have resented it; he just sent a flitting reminder through her brain, which served to goad her to physical exertions which she really ought not to have made, and then he laughed fiendishly over his successful ruse. With dismay did the daughter and handmaiden see the elaborate pudding added to the kitchen confusion. But they lived through it, (not without certain mutterings from Mattie which could not have been found in the Sunday-school lesson) and the rich sauce which accompanied it was just receiving its finishing touch when Master Robert arrived from school.

“Mother, oh mother!” he shouted in sudden, dismayed tones, “Oh, don’t, don’t!”

“My patience, child,” said Mrs. Dunlap,

nearly upsetting the large bottle in her hand as she started in fright.

“What *on earth* is the matter! What are you screaming about?”

“I didn’t mean to scream,” said Robert deprecatingly; “but oh, mother, you were just going to spoil that nice sauce, and I had to scream to stop you. It is *my* sauce, you know, the kind you always make for me, and if you put brandy in it I can’t eat it.”

“Why not, pray? half a teaspoonful of brandy! don’t you always eat it?”

“But mother, I’m a ‘safeguard,’ you know; president of our society; I *can’t* eat it?”

“Fiddlesticks! since when did you consider it necessary to teach your mother how to cook! You have eaten the sauce

a hundred times with the amount of brandy in it that I use."

"I never knew it," said Robert, mournfully but firmly.

"Of course you didn't. There is not enough in it to taste; it is simply used for a flavoring. Now go away—you don't deserve any pudding for startling me so; I thought something dreadful had happened. Run away, quick."

But Robert was his mother's own boy, and didn't give up things easily; he took two steps forward by way of obedience, then tried again. "But mother, I truly *can't* eat it; if there wasn't but half a drop of brandy in, I couldn't touch it; our pledge says we must 'touch not, taste not, handle not.' Say, *please*, mother, don't put the nasty stuff in, the pud-

ding will be just grand without it."

You are to remember that Mrs. Dunlap had been canning peaches, and baking cake, and overseeing pies, and concocting a pudding, and managing the affairs of the household generally, and it was very warm. In general, she was willing to do almost anything to gratify her bright-eyed handsome boy Robert; on ordinary occasions she would have laughed, and called him a "young fanatic," and then, most probably have commended him for his principles, though really, with her education they seemed foolishly extreme; but she would have set the brandy jar away, and good-naturedly have eaten the sauce without it; and liked it quite as well—it was not for the taste that she cared. But the occasion was extraordinary. She had


pressed her tired hands and feet into service over this pudding as a sort of peace offering for her family; she had taken extra pains with it; the teaspoonful of brandy was an extra very often omitted but nothing was to be omitted to-day; and now to have the offering quarantined just as it was about to be completed, was too much for nerves like hers. She straightened herself up from the table, brandy bottle in hand, spoke in sternest authority. "Robert Dunlap, go up to your room and stay there until the dinner bell rings, and then eat what is set before you; it is a new sort of morals that leads a boy to forget to honor his mother. You are to remember that *my* judgment is *almost* as good as yours. Now leave the room immediately."

And Robert obeyed, and Matrie Mar-

shall giggled. There was something very funny to her in the way that the familiar verses of the Sunday-school lesson ran that day. The very next word to "meekness" was "temperance," and she remembered it. Mattie was not scholarly, she was not aware that St. Paul had as much reference to the eating of meats, for instance, as he did to the drinking of liquors. Possibly if she *had* known it, it wouldn't have altered the force of the statement, as it really seems to in some minds. Mattie, in her ignorance, supposed that temperance was really more greatly needed in regard to alcoholic liquors than in any other place; so she applied the word to the brandy bottle in her Sabbath-school teacher's hand, and the contrast was — *to her* — so funny that she laughed.

CHAPTER II.

REAL AND IMITATION.

T was drawing toward the close of a summer evening; Mrs. Dunlap, with her hair unbound and her boots exchanged for slippers, rested from the excitements of the day, on a couch in the back parlor, while her daughter Eva, and her niece Alice lounged in the easy chairs, and talked over the events of the afternoon: The special event being the fact that on this Wednesday afternoon Mrs. Dunlap had entertained

the sewing circle connected with her church.

“I am thankful it is over,” she said, drawing a sigh of relief. “There is really nothing in my line of duties which exhausts me more than that sewing society; one never knows how many will come, nor how much to prepare, and it is anxiety and doubt from the beginning to the end; it just wears me out.”

“Aunt Annie,” said niece Alice, “don’t you think if the ladies had simpler teas, the society wouldn’t be such a burden?”

“Oh yes, I suppose so; it is very foolish to have such grand teas; I have always opposed it, but you can’t do anything with people. Mrs. Parsons always makes just as much parade as though she were giving a large party. I wonder

what she thought of *my* cake? I was determined to let her see that some others, besides herself, knew how to make cake; I don't believe she ever had anything so nice on her table: she always prides herself on having the nicest teas of any one; I was bent on showing her that *I* knew how to get up a supper as well as she did. She was really vexed this evening; I could see it in her face: just because my supper table outshone hers; so silly of her. Hand me the camphor bottle Eva.— Oh dear, what a headache I have! I knew I should have; I never fuss over that snow cake without having headache afterwards; but Mrs. Parsons' face actually paid me, it was so full of envy; some people are *so* small!"

“What did Mrs. Porter give for the box to-day?” This question from Eva.

“Why only two dollars! and she abundantly able to make out the entire sum. I didn't intend to give but one, myself; after what I had expended on this supper for their entertainment, it was all that I felt I could afford, but she actually provoked me into giving three. She seemed to think she had done such a wonderful thing in giving two, that I couldn't resist the temptation to show her she wasn't the most generous person in the world, after all. I dislike a parade of one's charities. Mrs. Porter is *so* ostentatious, I just enjoy letting down her pride once in a while. But oh dear me! I'm glad it's over. Your father says societies don't pay;

and I'm not sure I think they do, when they are managed at the expense of such a fearful headache as I have. But one thing is certain; I doubt whether any one will try to surpass my supper table to-night. I was really resolved upon showing them that I could make as good an appearance in that line as some who have finer rooms and more money."

What a strange ambition to possess a Christian woman! To make her a willing martyr to headache and weariness! Could St. Paul possibly have had such in mind when he said: "Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another?" Is it possible that he could have known that away down among the ages, in the nineteenth century, would live Christian women who

would be tempted to vainglory, and envy, and be filled with a desire to provoke one another, over the number of dishes presented at a society supper! As for the two young ladies who sat listening to this weary Christian martyr, the daughter drooped her eyes, and her fair face flushed; *was* there lurking in her heart, a sense of disappointment over her mother? Bright-eyed Alice laughed, and regarded her aunt with a curious air, as she said: "Ambition is a queer thing, isn't it, Aunt Annie?"

Ambition takes other forms than society suppers or society dollars, given for the purpose of exceeding some other woman's dollars. Mrs. Dunlap had many ambitions, and was conscious of them, albeit she fed some unconsciously.

It was but the next day after the society, that she descended from her chamber, ready for the brightness of the streets, arrayed in all the beauties of a carefully chosen, perfectly made, summer toilet. She was ready now, for that duty supposed to be dear to the feminine heart, viz., shopping. Miss Eva was also attired in the fairest of summer silks, prepared to attend her. Mattie came up the street with a pile of books in her arms, and stood in the tree-shaded doorway, and looked after the elegantly attired ladies, and looked down at her plain gray calico, and sighed: it was not that she despised the gray calico, it was that she thought of the coveted white dress for commencement, and realized that Miss Eva had the price of half a

dozen of them about her wardrobe at this moment, and the difference in spheres just then pressed heavily on her young heart.

In the fancy store where Mrs. Dunlap and her daughter stopped, there were many other ladies, among them a mother and daughter, both quite as elegantly attired as our friends; the daughter at least was indulging in rhapsodies over the lovely shades in kids. "Oh, now, mamma," she was saying, being so eager that her tones were hardly modulated enough to suit the proprietors of a first-class store — "don't say they are too expensive! You always say that about everything; and these are such beauties. I shall not be satisfied with any other quality. Here are Mrs. Dunlap and Eva.

Dear Mrs. Dunlap, do say that I ought to have this pair of kids, they are so lovely and they match my new suit perfectly."

"But they are so expensive, Fanny," murmured the mother; "and besides, six-button kids are absurd."

"Oh," said Mrs. Dunlap smilingly, "that is quite reasonable; *some* young ladies require ten buttons."

"Now hear that, mamma; you always think my tastes are expensive; and I don't begin with other girls. Mrs. Dunlap, don't you think I ought to have this pair? I have just set my heart on them."

"Girls will be girls," said Mrs. Dunlap, with a benevolent smile and a persuasive glance at the hard-hearted mother; "we

mustn't expect the wisdom of mature years on young shoulders."

"I know," said the mother, thoughtfully, "therefore I sometimes wonder, whether their mothers were not intended to have judgment for them."

"Oh well, it won't do to run athwart all their pretty tastes. Those gloves *are* a lovely shade; how much did you say? A ruinous price I declare; but you can't get gloves in that quality for less."

"Unless you can make up your mind to sacrifice yourself to only four buttons," said the other mother, a shade of sarcasm in her voice. Then daughter Eva claimed attention.

"Look, mamma, this is the lace I want; just the right pattern."

"Is it *real*?" asked Mrs. Dunlap, bending over it with anxious eyes.

"That is what I don't know," said the daughter, lowering her voice. "I wonder if Mrs. Stuart is a judge?" On being appealed to, Mrs. Stuart came forward and bent over the lace with careful gaze. "It is really quite impossible to tell;" she said at last. "The imitations are so very perfect, nowadays; I have to judge by the price of the article. Do you want real?"

"Oh yes indeed?" chorused mother and daughter, emphatically.

"Well I buy the imitation, nowadays; it is just as good, and no one can tell them apart."

"I *won't* have imitation," said Miss Eva, with decision.

“I never buy imitation,” said her mother, with firmness. “I dislike shams of any sort. I take real things or none.”

“Well now, what is the use; when you own that you can’t tell a good imitation from a real? Who knows whether it is a sham or not. For my part, I can’t bring my conscience to consent to paying the exorbitant prices asked for real lace.”

“My conscience is callous, where lace is concerned,” Mrs. Dunlap said, laughingly. “I am so fond of nice laces; it would be a real cross to me not to wear them. Well, Eva, I think we would better go to Weldon’s for lace; we can trust to their word. I must select a sun umbrella, though; my old one is quite too shabby to last through the season.”

Has it lately been your fortune to have to decide between the bewildering, ever-varying displays of sun umbrellas and select one to your mind, or, more properly speaking, to your purse? Then you know into what a labyrinth Mrs. Dunlap immediately plunged. Wooden handles, and ivory handles, and inlaid handles, and all silk, and part silk, and sattine, and white lining, and cream-tinted lining, and no lining at all. They began in price, at a dollar, and they went away up among the thirties. Mrs. Dunlap reflected; a dollar umbrella would certainly protect from the sun as effectually as a ten dollar one. "But it would turn gray so soon," said Eva. True, well then a two dollar one, all silk, durable, neat, unobtrusive. But then the handle was of

wood. Well, what of that? Wooden handles have nothing to do with protection from the sun's rays. "But they are so ugly," said Eva. "Oh I don't know," said Miss Fanny Stuart who had recently bought one, and didn't like to have it called ugly. "I think they are real nice." Mrs. Dunlap did not think so; she hesitated and questioned, and examined the silk, and examined the bones, and then went back to the handle, and finally laid the article aside and took up another; three dollars, four dollars, five dollars, there was some objection to them all, having to do with the *handles*. Much time, much talk, much patience, finally the dread task was accomplished; nine dollars and fifty cents for an instrument to keep out

the sunlight! But then the *handle* was *real* ivory, and was inlaid! The Stuarts, mother and daughter looked at each other, and directly they were on the street they said; "How awfully extravagant the Dunlaps are! I don't see how Mr. Dunlap endures the drain."

And said the mother: "I don't see how a Christian woman, can think it is right to spend so much on *nothings*; the idea that she won't wear anything but real lace; and she can't tell it from the imitation; that is nothing but pride. I don't understand how Christians justify themselves in these things." There was actually an undertone of complaisance that she, at least, was not a Christian. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts."

That sentence was in next Sabbath's lesson, and Miss Fanny Stuart was in Mrs. Dunlap's Bible class.

So too, was the patient young clerk who turned and tumbled and selected umbrella after umbrella for her teacher's fastidious gaze. Directly the momentous choice was made, she appealed to her teacher with another matter. "Mrs. Dunlap, did you know Clara Wheeler was in trouble?"

Now Clara Wheeler was another young lady from that large Bible class.

"No," said Mrs. Dunlap, kindly. "I haven't heard of any trouble; what is it?"

"Oh it is her brother. He has been tempted again, and was out late, and got in with a dreadful set of young men, and the store was entered that night, and

money taken from the safe, and they are afraid Fred will suffer; though of course he wasn't in that last affair; but it will be difficult to prove it, especially as he knew all about the safe."

"It will serve him right," said Mrs. Dunlap, severity in face and voice. "I have no patience with Fred Wheeler, the only son and his mother a widow; the way he goes on is simply disgraceful."

"I know it, ma'am; but Fred doesn't mean it; he is the best hearted boy that ever was; he has been led astray, but he loves his mother, and he feels dreadfully."

"I should think he would. Love shown in such a manner is not worth much; at least it wouldn't be to me. I have been expecting him to get into disgrace for

some time; I told Mr. Dunlap it would be a miracle if he didn't. I am sorry for poor Clara, but the innocent always have to suffer with the guilty, in this world."

"But, Mrs. Dunlap, Fred isn't *guilty*; not of what they will charge him with; he had been drinking, and acted like a simpleton, but that is the most they can say of him, except that he was found in bad company. Don't you think," and here the youthful voice took a pleading tone, "that if you spoke to Mr. Dunlap, and got him to interest himself in Fred he could get him out of this? It will just disgrace him for life, and I am afraid it will kill his poor mother."

"Well," said Mrs. Dunlap, and her voice was still cold; "as a rule I don't

interfere with Mr. Dunlap's business. I might mention Fred Wheeler to him, but I don't think it would do any good; I can't conscientiously say any good of the boy; I consider him a worthless young fellow. The idea of a boy allowing himself to be led away by every unprincipled scamp who happens to be thrown with him! It is too childish. I think Fred deserves a severe lesson. I am sorry for his mother, but he has brought it on himself and ought to take the consequences."

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." What a pity that St. Paul limited that advice to the *brethren*; if he

hadn't, perhaps this Christian woman would have felt it her Christian duty to take on somewhat of the spirit of meekness, and help to restore poor Fred Wheeler, even though he were "overtaken in a fault." The little clerk closed her lips firmly, and said with her eyes that she had made a mistake, had appealed to the wrong source, and resolved that she would plead no more for Fred Wheeler. Instead, she grew suddenly anxious to have Mrs. Dunlap hold her peace concerning him, realizing that the spirit of meekness with which the work must be done was wanting here.

As for Mrs. Dunlap, she went away ruffled; she honestly disbelieved in Fred Wheeler, but she hated to appear ungracious.

“Worthless fellow! she said to Eva, “just dragging his mother and sister down; if I were they I would have nothing more to do with him until he entirely reforms; if he ever does, which is doubtful. And she was in the worst possible condition to hear an appeal from a little unpretending thread-and-needle store, the door of which opened suddenly as she was passing, and a clear childish voice said: “Oh, Mrs. Dunlap, can mamma speak to you a minute?”

CHAPTER III.

“WHAT SHALL THE HARVEST BE?”



HAT now, I wonder,” said Mrs. Dunlap; but she went in. A little at one side sat a fair, pale girl, sewing steadily on a child’s embroidered dress. Behind the narrow counter stood a worn, pale woman, waiting for customers. This woman now addressed Mrs. Dunlap:

“I beg pardon for stopping you, ma’am, but I am in trouble, and Emma there suggested that we ask your advice. We have had a hard season, Mrs. Dunlap.

With what sickness and — and affliction” — here the voice faltered, and she looked down for an instant at the rusty black dress which she wore; “and the long and short of it is, we can’t get the money together for the quarter’s rent. We have strained every nerve, but we are seventeen dollars behind. The rent is due to-morrow night, and Mr. Smith isn’t the smoothest man in the world to deal with; and besides, he wants this building for a liquor saloon, and he will turn us out as sure as the world unless we are ready for him.”

“Well, really,” said Mrs. Dunlap, as the woman paused and seemed waiting for her to speak, “you *are* in a disagreeable position. What did you want me to do?”

Whereupon the shopwoman looked down, and the cheeks of the young girl at the end of the counter grew scarlet. Mrs. Dunlap's words sounded to them as cold as weights of solid lead dropping on their hearts, yet the *words* were well enough.

“Why, I thought,” said Mrs. Baker, hesitating and then beginning again, as Mrs. Dunlap waited, “seeing we were members of the same church, and Emma in your Bible class, and all, and you know how hard we have struggled, that may be you and the ladies, a few of them, would advance the seventeen dollars. I would pay you back every cent.”

It was said now, and she stood flushing and paling before the silken-robed sister in the church.

“Oh, dear!” said Mrs. Dunlap. “I don’t know. Money is so very scarce now-a-days. I could hardly command seventeen dollars myself.” And she toyed thoughtfully with the inlaid ivory handle of her new silk umbrella. “Don’t you think you pay too high a rent, Mrs. Baker? Mr. Smith ought to lower it. I don’t believe this little store is going to succeed, any way; it is too far down town, and then you know you can’t compete with other stores, even in trifles. You will just be getting deeper and deeper into debt all the time. Don’t you think you would better give it up, and let him have the room?”

“And *then* what would I do, ma’am?”

“Sure enough!” and the end of the new parasol was thoughtfully introduced

into Mrs. Dunlap's mouth. “It seems as though there ought to be *something* that you could do. Well, I don't know. I am very busy this week. To-morrow will be Friday, you know; sweeping and dusting day at my house, and the Saturday's baking to plan for, and Saturday is a busy day always. I don't know of any ladies who could help you, either; but I'll think it over, and try to *advise* you, at least. Emma, you may call at my house to-morrow or next day, in the evening, and possibly I may have something thought out; though really, Mrs. Baker, I can't promise you any money. Nothing is scarcer in these days than that. I'm sorry you don't succeed here; I was afraid you wouldn't. It requires

a good deal of skill to manage a fancy store, even in a small way."

Then Mrs. Dunlap went her way, more disturbed still. "The idea of expecting me to pay her rent, just because Emma is in my Bible class?" she said with spirit. "I declare I don't know but I shall have to give up my class in self-defence. One would think I had entered into obligations to support all the poor families and get all the scapegraces out of trouble. It is a dreadfully mixed up class, any way; all stations represented in it; I believe it ought to be divided."

"But, mother, Mrs. Baker didn't ask you to pay her rent; she only asked to borrow the money of some of the ladies."

"Oh, yes, that is a smooth way of

putting it. She can never pay it, and if she could, who wants to run around and ask people to lend her money? I'm sure *I* don't; I would rather pay it myself. I would have given her fifty cents if I had had it to spare, but by the time your lace is paid for I don't believe I shall have a cent left. Real lace is expensive business, Eva, and one can't do everything. I sometimes wish my tastes were not so highly cultivated; then I could wear shams like Mrs. Stuart and not mind it.”

“Mother,” said Emma Baker, looking up to the pale, worn woman, her own cheeks still glowing, “I *won't* call there to-morrow, or next day; *need* I?”

“No,” said Mrs. Baker. We will go to the poor-house first!” “Bear ye one

another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Mrs. Baker had applied for help in bearing her own crushing burden of poverty, but she could not get away from the feeling that it had been hurled back again on her own feeble shoulders. True, she was one of Christ's own, but she did not realize any better than did Mrs. Dunlap how to "walk in the Spirit."

A glowing, perfumed Sabbath morning; August, but the August heats had lessened, and a breeze from the sea had rolled inland and freshened everything, and in the elegant Sabbath-school room where Mrs. Dunlap's Bible class gathered all was brightness and beauty. Mrs. Dunlap herself was in her place, every

detail of her tasteful toilet in perfect order. Rich silk for her robing, real lace at throat and wrists, rare flowers adorned her real lace bonnet, delicate kids matching with the tone of the ribbons which fluttered among the flowers and laces, and the inlaid ivory handled sun umbrella lay in soft silky folds on the seat beside her, while the teacher opened her small, finely-bound, fine-print Bible and searched for the place. “I have hardly had time to do my lesson justice, young ladies,” she began. “This has been a remarkably busy week at our house, and many important matters have had to suffer.” Then did Mattie Marshall’s mischievous eyes flash behind their drooping lids. Did not she know of the many kinds of society cake and the rare

puddings, and the rows and rows and rows of fruit cans which helped to crowd out this important lesson from her teacher's thoughts? Nay, had she chosen, she could have explained that late into Saturday night an important finishing of a real lace trimmed mantle had held her teacher's weary eyes until her husband was obliged to assure his wife that it was Sunday. What marvel that she had little time for the study of the lesson? The work of the hour commenced. The young ladies alternated in reading the verses, and the young hand-maiden Mattie Marshall, read the first. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."

Was there a tone of suppressed mischief in her voice, or did her teacher

imagine it? Was the young girl really to blame, when a vision of hot kitchen, and broken dishes, and keen, sharp-cutting words whizzing in the air, floated through her brain? Besides, since that Monday morning the week had been long and warm and full of business, and the way had been plentifully strewn with illustrations fitting into this same lesson. How was anything short of a watchful abiding in Christ, an entire resting in the guidance and shielding care of the Spirit, to tide one through a week of time, without sadly illustrating such a verse as that?

It is so much easier to be dreary than to be joyful, to be restless than to exhibit that unruffled front which can be called peace; it is so hard, under trying provocation, to be gentle; it is so difficult to

exhibit long-suffering amid constant petty annoyances — surely, it is no wonder that Mrs. Dunlap failed. The cruel pity is that she was so used to failing, she hardly realized that she had failed.

The reading progressed. “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Fanny Stuart read it, and regarded the teacher curiously. Had *she* crucified the flesh with its affections? Didn’t she like the expensive gloves, and ribbons, and styles, as well as any person could? Didn’t she buy “real” laces when quite nice people contented themselves with imitation?

“Didn’t she spend three times as much on a parasol as I should think of doing?” queried this young lady, “and I am not a Christian at all? I wonder what she

thinks this verse means, and I wonder what she thinks she has crucified? It is all very queer, any way. I do wonder if Christians *were* so different from other people when Paul was on earth!”

So thought this scholar in Mrs. Dunlap's Bible class. They read on. “Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.” “Oh, my!” murmured Katie Wells. “Who pays any attention to that direction, do you suppose? I know lots of people who are just as envious of each other as they can be—Christian people, too. About all they live for is to get ahead of somebody else.” She spoke to Alice, Mrs. Dunlap's niece. Was it within the scope of human powers to keep the mind from travelling back to that elaborate

society tea, and the after conversation, wherein it transpired that the ruling motive for getting it up was not, after all, the gratification of the guests, but the discomfiture of one of them?

“I know people who, apparently, give money for no other purpose,” said the young lady on her right, chiming in with Katie’s criticism. And while Alice *said* nothing, she thought of the three dollars in the missionary box, that were given because Mrs. Porter thought she was so benevolent in giving two! “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou, also, be tempted.” The little clerk in the grand store was not the reader but while the verse was being

read she raised her great searching eyes, and fixed them full on Mrs. Dunlap's face, and both of them thought instantly of Fred. Wheeler, and the “fault” in which he had been overtaken, and the refusal to make any attempt at restoring him, either in the spirit of meekness or any other spirit.

Apparently, Mrs. Dunlap had forgotten that there was the faintest possibility of *her* ever being tempted to do wrong. She flushed over this coincidence, and was so busy with her thoughts that she gave no heed to the reading of the next verse, though it was her daughter's clear voice that spoke the words, “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” The sewing girl, Emma, was not present. Eva looked at that

moment to her vacant seat, and went back over the last recollections of her, and her mother, and their burden. What was the connecting link between those two, weighed down with poverty and anxiety, and her mother? What was the unconverted daughter to think of the bond of sisterhood between members of the church of Christ, if she judged in the light of her mother's witnessing?

"Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord. What wonders as a witness had Mrs. Dunlap accomplished during that one week for that one lesson! I have given you but a passing picture of a half dozen events amid the hundreds which crowded the week, but seeing the spirit of these illustrations, what fruit probably grew with them and spread its influence far

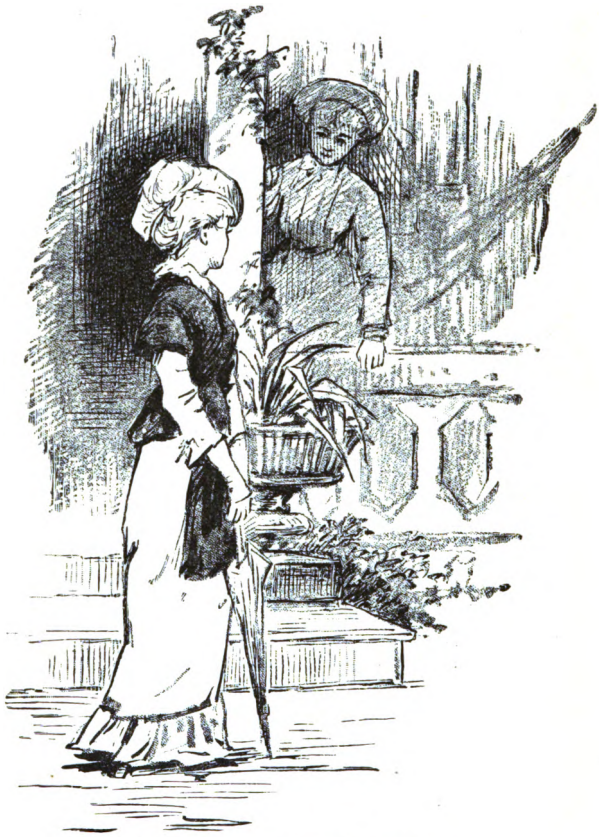
and wide! On the whole, that was a trying hour for Mrs. Dunlap. She honestly desired to do those nine young ladies good. Do you imagine she accomplished it? Should you judge from what you have heard of her life, that she spent an hour a day during that week, or fifteen minutes a day, or five minutes a day, or even five entire earnest minutes in *praying* for those girls? And yet she honestly desired, on that lovely Sabbath morning to speak some words which might do them good. Do you believe she accomplished it?

“I don't know what to do with my class:” she said in a confidential tone to a fellow-teacher, as they walked up the shady street together. “They are certainly the most thoughtless set of young

ladies that were ever classed together. I don't seem to make any impression on them." (Ah, yes, teacher, you do. Your impression is deep, and will be lasting!) "Now, this morning, although the lesson was so solemn, some of them actually seemed to find food for amusement. I believe Mattie Marshall ought to be removed to some other class. You know she lives with me, and I am not sure but that affects my influence over her. She feels so familiar with me that I don't impress her as a stranger would. I believe it is a good deal so with my own daughter." Alas! alas! that I should have to admit that I believe with all my heart that it would not only be better for the young daughter, but for the young hand-maiden, to be removed to

another class, not necessarily on account of *familiarity*, but on account of *contradiction* between profession and practice. Both of those young ladies learned long ago the solemn words of God, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” and both of them are at work—one of them consciously, the other unconsciously, applying the test to the life fruits. Said the sympathetic fellow-teacher, “You must remember one verse in to-day’s lesson—such a helpful verse, I think; ‘Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.’” Blessed words, indeed; helpful words; but should they have been applied to this teacher? Did they fit? Weary in *well* doing! *Are* there very many who have chance to weary in that? Was it not a

pity that some searching voice did not arrest Mrs. Dunlap's ears by repeating other words of God — words, too, from that same lesson, so fraught with solemn truth that surely they ought to have startled her, "If a man think himself to be *something* when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself;" and, "Let every man *prove* his own work;" and, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;" and, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."




HENRIETTA GOES AFTER THE LACE.

PICTURES FROM MRS. PIERSON'S
LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE NURSERY.

CCUPANTS, Master Charlie Pier-
son, aged eight; Miss Lulu Pierson,
aged five; Miss Henrietta Pierson, aged
twelve, and Mamma Pierson, sewing
busily on a blue summer silk dress.

“Mamma,” says Miss Henrietta, “the
girls want me to join their missionary
society. They are going to raise money

for the missionary ship, and it is only ten cents a share. They meet once a week. I suppose I may join."

"No," said Mrs. Pierson, decidedly. "I don't believe I care to have you. What is the use of a missionary ship? I am sure there are ships enough; just as though they couldn't use the vessels that there are already to carry their things. That is nothing but pride. Hand me the pinking-iron, Lulu. Take care, Charlie, don't bring your sponge in this direction; this blue silk spots dreadfully. If I had thought of that I should never have bought it for such a girl as you are, Henrietta.

"But, mamma, all the girls are going to join, and I feel real mean to be the only one."

“Oh, well, you needn’t. I guess I have influence enough to keep you from sinking, even if you don’t belong to the children’s society, and I really haven’t money to use in any such direction. Your father contributes to Foreign Missions every year, and that ought to be enough. There is no sense in children dabbling in such matters; the money would only be wasted.”

“Papa gave a five-dollar bill last Sunday for the missionaries,” remarked Lulu, “and he said he gave as much as that every single year.”

“Of course he does, and that is enough. We aren’t made of money. It costs a great deal to support a family and dress you children. It is really enough to frighten one to see how expensive every-

thing is. Here is Lulu's new white dress, which won't cost a cent less than thirteen dollars by the time I get it done. Just think of that!"

"Mrs. Harris said yesterday that the Hamburg of that dress was the nicest she ever saw," said Henrietta.

"It *is* nice," Mrs. Pierson answered, complacently. I never buy *cheap* things; it is poor economy."

"Mamma, may I have a pair of truly kid gloves to wear with my new dress to-morrow?"

"Oh, you little mouse, only five years old and begging for 'truly' kid gloves. But I mean you to have a pair, child; they will look so cunning on your little hands that I can't help it. Henrietta, *must* you have this skirt puffed? It is

very trying work, and I'm afraid I shan't get it done for to-morrow."

"Oh, yes, mamma, I really must. You know they puff everything nowadays, and a *silk* dress without puffs would look so funny. Oh, dear me! Don't you feel *sure* you can get it done? I do want it so dreadfully for to-morrow!"

"I mean to try," said Mrs. Pierson, resignedly, "for you really have nothing in which to appear. I was ashamed of you last Sunday."

The mention of to-morrow turned the current of Master Charlie's thoughts in that direction.

"Mamma, Lulu and I were ashamed last Sunday. We were the only ones in our great class who didn't have a penny to put in the box."

Mrs. Pierson sighed.

“ Well, why didn't you go to your father and get one ? ”

“ I did, but he said he hadn't any change, and he couldn't be always bothering about pennies Sunday morning.”

“ I think as much. It does seem a pity that even the Sabbath day can't be free from thoughts and plans about money. For my part I think it would be just as well to teach the children that it wasn't of so much importance. Every Sunday morning there is a frantic cry through this house for *pennies* ! What is done with them, anyway ? ”

“ They are for the heathen, mamma,” explained little Miss Lulu, tipping over her box of costly building blocks as she spoke, thereby turning the elephant and

the camel and several others of the wooden menagerie into limbless confusion.

“Mercy!” exclaimed Mrs. Pierson. “What a racket you make with your playthings, Lulu. You have too many. The house is full of them. The idea of the children’s pennies being gathered up for the heathen! As if that little bit of money would do *them* any good. It isn’t money that they need, either; it is teaching.”

“But, mother, money buys Bibles and such things and pays teachers.” This from Charlie, in a thoughtful tone.

“Well,” sharply, “so it buys a good many other things — pants, for instance. Get off your knees immediately. Those you have on cost four dollars, and there


is a thin place in the knee already. I don't see why missionaries need so much pay. If they want to go and teach the heathen they should have a higher motive than money. Anyway, I don't believe in putting you children up to think you are doing great things taking your pennies to church for the *heathen*. Might better save them for the poor children at home. There are plenty of *them*, I am sure. How this lace dazzles my eyes! I don't believe there is going to be enough of it, either. Now I think of it, Henrietta, you had better run right down to Mrs. Burgess and have her save the piece. Tell her to let you bring it up, and I will use off of it what I need, and send it back before midnight. I shall have to sew until about that time to get this

dress done. It is the piece that is seventy-five cents a yard, you know.”

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

CHAPTER II.

IN THE PARLOR.

CCUPANTS: Mrs. Pierson, with her new pattern for lace-work in her hand; Miss Henrietta, aged eighteen, in all the glory of a perfected summer toilet, and two ladies — callers.

Listen :

“Oh, dear,” said Mrs. Pierson, “I don’t see how you ladies get time to do so much. I really haven’t a spare hour now to read the books and papers that the house is full of. We couldn’t think

of taking anything more. What is the use?"

"But the *Foreign Missionary*, Mrs. Pierson; you surely ought to make an exception to that! It is only one dollar a year, and is one of the regular channels for gaining missionary intelligence. Of course you want to know what our missionaries are doing."

"Well, I don't know. I suppose they understand their business, and can attend to it without my taking the trouble to keep watch of them. At least I'm sure I haven't time for it. It does seem to me that the world grows busier every day. Have you seen any of this new lace-work, Mrs. Beldon? It is rather trying on the eyes, but when it is done it really looks wonderfully like old point.

My Lulu is crazy to have some for her neck and sleeves. Children have so many notions in regard to dress nowadays that it really takes a mother most of the time to keep up with them. I can't remember that I thought so much about it when I was a girl."

"Then you really will not help us by subscribing for a copy of the magazine?"

"Oh dear, no; it would be of no sort of use. Just another book to lie around in the way. I haven't time to read, and I'm sure Mr. Pierson hasn't. He says he gives as much as he can afford for Foreign Missions, and it wouldn't help them any if he were to read all the missionary news in the world. Mrs. Beldon, don't you really think there must be something wrong somewhere? What *do* they want

of such a fearful amount of money? Why, the collections in our own church are very large I am sure; and just think how many churches are giving all the time. And here Dr. Powers spent almost an hour last Sunday in telling about the *enormous* debt of the Foreign Board. Mr. Pierson says he doesn't think it is honest for people to run in debt in this way. Somebody must spend the money. Now, the missionaries do not have to dress to keep up with the times, nor to keep their houses furnished handsomely, nor give parties, and all that sort of thing, to introduce their children into society. Such things tell ruinously on the purse. But what on *earth* can be done with all the money that the Missionary Board get hold of is more than I can imagine."

The faintest suspicion of a smile hovered over Mrs. Beldon's face.

"I think you said you had not read what had been done in China, and Japan, and Africa, and India during the past year?" she said, meaningly.

"Why, no; as I tell you, I haven't time to read much. Henrietta always has some scheme on hand that takes time and money, and needs mother to help her out."

Whereupon the younger of the two callers turned suddenly to the fair daughter.

"Your name reminds me that we have also an errand with you. The young ladies, you know, have formed a sewing circle to assist in fitting out Miss Bremer for her home in China. I am commis-

sioned to ask if you will join them?"

"Why," said Miss Henrietta, blushing and laughing, "I don't know how it is that mamma and I seem to have so much less time at our disposal than other people. I really don't see how I can do another thing. I superintend my own sewing and Lulu's dressmaking, and it keeps me running to the dressmaker's or the stores about half the time. And then the demands of society are so great nowadays. As mamma says, there is always something. I am bankrupt, too," with another sparkling laugh. "Papa declared yesterday that if I did not make my monthly allowance hold out better he would foreclose on me. I provide my own gloves and such things, and you know Alexandre's kids are ruinous in

price. And, besides, they wear such light colors that one has to have a new pair about every month. I always buy the best; mamma brought us up to that; but they certainly cost dreadfully. I really don't see how I can do anything, do you, mamma?"

"Mercy, no, child! You are driven to death now. She has to go with Lulu to dancing-school twice a week. Some mothers are willing to have their children go alone to such places, but I never could bring myself to it. And then, as she says, she superintends Lulu's dressmaking and they have made such ridiculous rules as to how the children in dancing-school shall be dressed at their publics that it is quite a study to get around in time with a new toilet. Absurd! I feel like

quarreling with it. But Lulu's heart is set on it. I don't know what makes the child so fond of dress. I don't remember that I was when a child."

"I never could understand why ladies, as soon as they were going on a mission, had to have their clothes made for them." This from Miss Henrietta, with another of her silvery little laughs. "Miss Breemer has always done her own sewing. Does becoming a missionary unfit one for such work?"

"It isn't a necessity," the caller said, coldly. "She has a great deal to do, of course; but this is a labor of love."

"Of course," said Mrs. Pierson, "we all have great respect for her."

"Well," said Miss Henrietta, "I'm willing to *respect* her with all my might;

but as for sewing for her, that is another thing. I told mamma only yesterday that I wished I could get up a bee to help me with my fall suits. And Charlie said he would like to have a paper circulated to help him get the gold watch his heart is set on. He thought it would do him as much good as Mr. Stuart away out in China. You know the boys have been asked to help with that fund. Charlie can't; he is worse off about pocket-money than I am. Boys have such expensive tastes. When I was a little girl I had quite an idea of joining a missionary society to get the little ship, you know; but mamma didn't approve, and I didn't. They got the ship, I think, didn't they?"

Before Mrs. Wells could answer this

fair searcher after missionary intelligence her mother chimed in:

“No, I didn’t want her to join a child’s missionary society. I dislike to see children aping their elders.. Let them be young while they can, and enjoy their plays and their dancing and their fun. The cares of life come early enough at best.” And she took another stitch in her fascinating lace-work and sighed.

The callers arose to go.

“I am sorry you can not help us in any way,” said the indefatigable Mrs. Beldon.

“Well,” smiling brightly, and brushing a stray rose-leaf from her summer silk, “of course I would be glad to if I could. But this is such a busy world; so many things to take up one’s attention.

Have you been to Madame's opening?
Her fall hats are too lovely for anything!"

"Out of the abundance of the *heart*
the mouth speaketh!"

CHAPTER III.

AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE.



PRESENT: Mrs. Henrietta Harper, matron; Mr. Harper, merchant; Master Charlie Pierson, student; Miss Lulu Pierson, lady of leisure.

“Women’s Missionary Society. What is that institution, pray? I thought the men managed these affairs.

This Mr. Harper asked, after musing over his third cup of coffee.

His wife: “Oh, well, it is some new notion. The world is full of restless

women, you know, who have no home cares nor society cares, and who like to manage so well that they must find vent in some way. There seems to be a special *furor* just now about the Woman's Branch as they call themselves. I suppose it will blow over in time, just as the Woman's Crusade did, and a hundred other things that they have meddled with. Lulu, what did they want of you, yesterday?"

"To join the Young Ladies' Circle," laughed Miss Lulu. "What are they trying to do anyway? Are there more heathen than there used to be? How have they managed all these years without us girls?"

"The idea of *your* being a member of a Mission Circle!" exclaimed Mr.

Charlie Pierson, bursting into a loud laugh, that subsided in a succession of amused giggles. "I should like to have seen your face when they asked you. Why didn't you tell them that ten-button kids consumed all your money, and most of your leisure in getting them on and off."

"And then, if they had asked for a contribution from my big brother, I could have said that cigars and horses were the joy of his life and the end of his ambition," retorted Miss Lulu, with spirit.

"Oh, well, now," said Mrs. Henrietta, "of course you neither of you mean that. We all belong to the Church, except Charlie, and we are all of course interested in missions. To be sure we may differ somewhat as to the best methods of promoting the cause. Mother believed

in giving money through proper channels. Father always contributed to Foreign Missions, and I am sure you do, Mr. Harper, every year; don't you?"

"Oh, I give something," that gentleman answered, carelessly. "Have to, to get rid of the collector; they manage that thing with so much method nowadays. I can't say I do it from principle. In my opinion the Foreign Mission cause is a failure. There has been money enough sunken in that way to have made this country over. And what has it accomplished? The so-called conversion of a few heathen, who will not do anything for themselves or anybody else, now that they are converted. If I were at the head of affairs I would keep the money at home."

A good deal of it *is* kept at home, I presume," said Mrs. Harper, significantly. "As long ago as when I was a girl of eighteen or so, I remember hearing mother wonder what on earth could be done with all the money, and the Mission Boards always in debt. That opened my eyes, and I have believed ever since that a good deal of the money which we think we are sending to the heathen pays enormous salaries, and builds fine offices, and all that sort of thing, for people who like to manage such 'lucrative affairs.

"What a nice thing it must be to belong to such a Church!" Charlie said this, with something very like a sneer on his gay and handsome face. "Select your men of trust from the very heart

of a great Church, and not have then even the degree of confidence in them that a man has in his confidential clerk, who makes no pretensions or professions. I think I should like to belong! Lovely institution, that! Still, I don't see why *you* should be so bitter, Sis; very little of your money has been wasted in that way, I should say."

A flush of vexation mounted to Mrs. Harper's handsome forehead, as she answered:

"What do you mean, Charlie? I hope you are not growing skeptical with all the rest."

Growing skeptical! That is a good one. I can assure you, my good sister that I have already grown as far as it is at all necessary in that. My education

is quite complete in some branches. It was begun early. There is one verse in the Bible, among others, in which I am a firm believer, and that is: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' I am going in the exact way in which I was trained, for that matter; so are the rest of you. I began to get my eyes open in regard to this question when I was hardly eight years old. When I saw my worthy father pay out money freely for cigars and fruits, or anything that took his fancy, and send me frequently to my Sabbath-school class in a state of mortification because he wouldn't have me bothering around on Sunday morning teasing for pennies, I asked myself which was the most impor-

tant in his mind, cigars or heathen? When I discovered, a little later, that he paid five hundred dollars for a favorite horse, and the next Sunday gave five dollars to the heathen, I said to myself, horse or heathen, which? How long do you suppose it took me to decide which he placed the highest? When I found my respected mother paying thirteen dollars for one white dress for Lulu, when she was almost a baby, and objecting, on the score of economy, to our taking shares at ten cents in the missionary ship, what was the reasonable conclusion to which a boy of common sense would have come? When I found her spending fifty dollars for one lace set, and objecting, on the score of economy, to subscribing for the *Missionary Herald* at

fifty cents a year, why, wasn't it the old question of *heathen* or *horses*, which? When my oldest sister spent day after day in an eternal round of shopping and millinering, to get ready for the party or the opera, and refused, on the score of lack of time, to attend a missionary sewing-circle, and gave the ruinous price of Alexandre kids as a reason why she could not contribute to the cause, could I help deciding which was the most important?"

"Upon my word," said Mrs. Henrietta, with a curling lip, "what an observing boy you were!"

"Oh, yes, indeed I was. Very few things escaped my eyes or ears; few things *do* escape a boy of eight, and from that age on. My young sister here

contributed her mite toward my education. Do you remember a certain occasion on which you cried for an hour because mother had not finished the lace ruffles in time for the regular Sunday show? And when she told you she should have had them done if she hadn't been almost forced to go in and help sew buttons on Miss Bremer's travelling suit, you said you hated Miss Bremer and her travelling suit, and she was nothing but a missionary, anyway, and you hoped she would drown on her way to China?"

"Just a child's silly fit of rage," interrupted Mrs. Henrietta. "You showed your good sense in letting that influence you!"

"Oh, but the trouble was she lived

up to her principles during all the following years, and does yet, and so do you. You like frankness, my good sister; I heard you tell Prof. Maynard so yesterday. It isn't often I trouble you with any, but since you are shocked at my skeptical principles I am anxious that you should see they were fairly secured. Pretty early in life I came across this *questioning* dodge—this attempt to call to account the use of the funds for missions—and to hint at wastefulness, inexcusable extravagance, if nothing worse. I caught at it. I don't believe I was by nature intended for a scoffer. I set out on the study of the whole question, with an earnest desire to make my father and mother and sisters into consistent Christians if I could. Now what did I find?

First, that ministers in all denominations, and of all degrees of age and learning, had almost universal respect for and confidence in the public officers of the churches. Pretty soon I found that honesty was so much the rule, and so fully expected, that when once in a score of years a defalcation occurred, and the man was a Christian, straightway there was such a hue and cry made over the country — made, too, by some of these very people who had been whispering about the question, ‘What becomes of all the money?’ as proved conclusively that whatever became of it they had full and unwavering confidence in the man who had it in charge. Said I to myself, ‘That excuse was humbug;’ and once my eyes were opened nothing was clearer than

that fact. Then I said, 'What about the money? what is it doing?' And I took to studying up our country. I sought after and devoured statistics. What did I find? Why, that the field was so broad — so awfully, incomprehensibly broad — that my mind lost itself in the vastness, and I said: 'Why, surely, there is not money enough in the world to reach all these places, as, if people believed in the Bible, they ought to be reached. What about the five-hundred-dollar horses, and the thousand-dollar rings, and the lace curtains and the Brussels carpets, and the ten-button kids *then?*

“‘The field is the world.’ I read that in my mother’s Bible. And standing side by side with it, the call: ‘Go ye into all the *world* and preach the gospel

to every creature.' And sounding along with it the solemn complaint: 'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.' And I found my mother and sisters, readers of this Bible, professedly guided by its pages, telling the monthly missionary collectors that the demands of society were so great that their time and their purses were pre-empted. What was a man, who wasn't a fool, to think but that this whole question of religion, as it is practiced before our eyes, is a humbug of the most ignorant sort!"

During this harangue, the like of which had never been heard from Charlie Pierson before, the family had disposed of themselves variously. Lulu, feeling unable to stem the tide of words, and being desirous of knowing whether the hat

which had just come home exactly matched the suit with which it was to be worn, slid from the room. Mrs. Henrietta took up the morning paper and pretended to read, but *heard* every word. The brother-in-law stood leaning against the mantel, hat in hand, listening and enjoying, as a man without a very high-toned nature can enjoy home thrusts, even when aimed at him or his.

“Upon my word,” he said, when the roused young man paused for breath, “you ought to have been a preacher instead of a lawyer.”

“Humph,” said Charlie, let down from his height and turning contemptuously away. “If I were a preacher I’d go and preach to the Caffres or the South Sea Islanders; anywhere, in preference to

staying among people who have sold themselves to summer silks and velvets and vanity. Come on, Ford, let's get down town."

"Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their *mouth*, but with their *hearts* they are far from me."

"There is that *withholdeth* more than is meet, and it *tendeth* to poverty."

"They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."

"He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for *whatsoever* a man soweth, that *shall he also reap*."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FIELD, WOOD, AND MEADOW RAMBLES, or How we Went Bird's-nesting. By Amanda B. Harris. Illustrated by George F. Barnes. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$2.00. Equal in elegance and excellence to any publication of the season is *Field, Wood, and Meadow Rambles*, by Amanda B. Harris. In it the author describes the adventures and experiences of two young ladies who spent one summer in searching the fields and woods for the purpose of studying the peculiarities and habits of the birds of the region. The story is delightfully told, and will undoubtedly rouse scores of young ladies to attempt the same thing next season. The work is illustrated by twelve exquisite drawings by George F. Barnes, with frontispiece, title page and vignette. The paper on which the text and illustrations are printed is of the best; the margins are liberal and the binding elegant and strong. Within and without its attractions entitle it to a foremost place among the best gift books of the year.

LEADING MEN OF JAPAN. With a Historical Summary of the Empire. By Charles Lanman. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$2.00. No man is better qualified to write upon Japanese subjects than Mr. Lanman, who for several years was a resident of the Empire, and a student of its political, social, and religious elements and characteristics. During the past dozen years Japan has taken immense strides in what we are pleased to call civilization. The customs and beliefs of many centuries have been overthrown; the form of government has been changed, and methods which have until now been peculiar to western nations have been introduced. It is not to be supposed that all this has been accomplished without effort. The men who have played the rôle of reformers have had many obstacles to contend with, and even now there is no lack of opposition to the introduction of foreign civilization. Mr. Lanman gives an interesting account of the changes made, and of the prospects for the future, in these sketches of the leading men of the country. It is a book which every one who wishes to keep abreast with the times ought to read, and which a great many will read. It is the only work of the kind which has ever been published.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

POLLY'S SCHEME. By Corydon. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. Here is a book that ought to create a sensation; bright, breezy and jolly; full of life from cover to cover, and worthy a place in any of the countless carpet-bags which will be packed by vacationists this summer. "Polly's Scheme" is one that has occurred to hundreds of weary city-dwellers when casting about to find ways and means to spend the summer months comfortably and profitably. It was for herself and husband to rent a nice little furnished house in the country for the summer, persuade their friends to live with them on the coöperative plan, save money, and be happy. Polly and her husband were young and inexperienced, and imagined that they had made an original discovery. They were successful in securing just such a place as they dreamed of, and took possession, with the promise of boarders as soon as the season should open. The book is a history of the occurrences and happenings of that summer, and a most entertaining history it is. From the sudden advent and equally sudden departure of Mrs. Vivian Sylvester—who insisted on having a fire lighted every morning to take the chill off the air for the sake of her poodle—down to the close of the season when the curtain falls on the story and its characters, it is full of surprises and humorous incidents. The character drawing is clearly and skillfully done, and the whole book hasn't a dull sentence in it. It is just long enough to be read in a single afternoon, and the laziest man in the world could not possibly go to sleep over it. Mark it down for a sure place in the vacation bundle of books, even if it has to be read before that time. It will bear a second perusal.

SOME YOUNG HEROINES. Illustrated. By Pansy. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. Another book by Pansy, made up of charming stories expressly adapted to the reading of girls, and filled with beautiful pictures. It would be difficult to describe the manifold attractions that are held between the covers of this book, but they can be easily got at by little readers when once the volume is in their hands.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE TEMPLE REBUILT. By Frederick R. Abbe. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.25. A new edition of this poem, re-written, enlarged and rearranged, has been brought out in obedience to a demand on the part of the public, and will be found by those who now read it for the first time a work of high purpose and rare ability. Mr. Abbe is a poet in the truest sense of the word, and his subject is one which gives the largest opportunity for thought and expression. The poem involves the story of primal innocence, the fall of the soul, its restoration through Divine grace, and final salvation. By the "temple" the author typifies the soul of man; it is cast into ruins by sin; the new foundation is the plan of salvation as laid down by Christ; the builders are the Christian virtues and graces; the implements are prayer and good works: and through these the edifice again arises in its pristine purity and beauty. The author paints in vivid language the various scenes which rise before him during the progress of the poem; the bright radiance of the heavenly courts; the thronging seraphim and white-robed angels; the star-gemmed skies; the beautiful things of earth; the horrors of the pit, and the terrible scenes of the last day. The closing portion of the poem is entitled "Hallelujah," and is a call to all created things on earth and in heaven to praise the Lord for his redemption. We quote briefly from this section to give the reader an idea of the characteristics of the author's style and an example of his skill in the choice and use of language:

Praise Him, ye mountains! on whose beetling crags
Nestle the eagles, peering for their prey;
Where from the clouds of thunder tempests bind
Their brows with terror, and the sullen snows
With cold caressing lap the traveler;
Or where the molten entrails vomit fire
In furious miniature of final doom.
In higher grandeur yet will you arise,
Under a fairer sky, a calmer clime,
Bright pillars of the sun; your radiant brows,
Disarmed of every weapon of dismay,
The purple pavement of angelic feet,
With sovereign peace on every peak enthroned.

The volume is handsomely printed on good paper, and bound in cloth.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FARMING FOR BOYS. What they have done, and what others may do in the cultivation of farm and garden. How to begin, how to proceed, and what to aim at. By the author of *Ten Acres Enough*. Illustrated. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.25. This excellent work, from the pen of the author of *Ten Acres Enough*, will be warmly welcomed by boys who delight in country work as well as by parents who would like to see their sons settle down to good honest labor on the old homestead or on farms of their own. The author endeavors to convince boys who are living in the country that their future prosperity and happiness will be best promoted by remaining where they are instead of flocking to the city, where work is harder and prospects more uncertain. He shows them the advantages of farm life, its healthfulness, its freedom from temptation, and the sure reward it brings to intelligently directed industry. He appeals to fathers who have boys old enough to do farm work to arouse an interest in them, by giving them gardens or patches of their own to work on from which they can realize some personal benefit. He says truly that the children of too many farmers have been kept as mere drudges, with no pains taken to encourage their individual enterprise by showing them how to make something for themselves. Farmers' boys understand early that the making of their fortunes rests with themselves. If they have nothing of personal interest to hold them to their homes beyond the natural home affections, it is hard to keep them there. If parents would afford them some little opportunity to begin to lay up something early, they would soon find farm life as attractive as the dreams of city life. The book is in the form of a story, and will be read by those for whom it is intended with delight and profit.

LITTLE FOLKS' EVERYDAY BOOK. Edited by Amanda B. Harris. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. This little volume prepared upon the plan of the birthday books which are so popular nowadays, is destined to win merit and good favor wherever it goes. Not only will the "little folks," for whom it was specially designed, find pleasure in turning its leaves, but the older members of the family as well, for the lines are from pens highly prized. It contains a picture, a verse and a blank for every day of the year, together with twelve full-page pictures in color, representing the various months of the year, designed by G. F. Barnes.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

HALF YEAR AT BRONCKTON. By Margaret Sidney. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. This bright and earnest story ought to go into the hands of every boy who is old enough to be subjected to the temptations of school life. It teaches a lesson of incomparable importance, and in such a manner as to leave a permanent impression.

OUR AMERICAN ARTISTS. Second series. By S. G. W. Benjamin. Ill. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. The first volume of this series appeared two years ago, and met with immediate and universal favor. Mr. Benjamin, who is himself an artist, has taken special pains to give such information in regard to our living and best-known painters as their admirers most desire to obtain. Each of the biographical sketches contained in the volume is accompanied by a portrait with a view of the artist's studio and a reproduction of some one of his works. Many of the artists have themselves furnished the designs for engraving. The book is admirably adapted for presentation purposes, both on account of the character of its contents, and the elegant manner in which it is printed and bound.

OUR TRAVELLING PARTY. By Daniel C. Eddy. Five vols. Ill. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$5.00. In these five volumes Dr. Eddy has brought together in an interesting manner, his experiences during a European tour describing in a succinct and interesting way the various countries through which he passed, together with the characteristics of the people. The first volume is devoted to *England and Scotland*: the second to *Ireland*, the third to *The Alps and the Rhine*: the fourth to *Paris and Amsterdam* and the closing volume to the countries lying between the *Baltic and Vesuvius*. The several volumes are illustrated.

HOME AND SCHOOL. A song book for children. By L. C. Elson. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. The author and compiler of this book is the editor of the *Musical Herald*, and a well-known musical authority. He has brought together a number of pleasant songs — all pieces adapted for home and school singing, which will be eagerly welcomed.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND MIDSUMMER SONGS. Ill. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. A dainty volume and one that will find favor among a multitude of purchasers for the holiday season is this collection of choice pieces by popular authors, brought together by a judicious hand. Great pains have been taken by the publishers to make it an exceptionally attractive volume, and the success has been complete. The type is large and clear, and the illustrations from designs by prominent American artists. In size, it is uniform with *How We Went Birds'-Nesting*, one of the most popular of last year's presentation books.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE TENT IN THE NOTCH. By Edward A. Rand. A Sequel to "Bark Cabin on Kearsarge." Ill. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. The boys and girls who last year read Mr. Rand's charming book, *Bark Cabin on Kearsarge*, will hail this present volume with genuine delight. It is a continuation of that story, with the same characters, and relates the adventures of the Merry family during the vacation season, the camping-out place being changed from Kearsarge to the Notch, and the bark cabin giving place to a large tent for a summer residence. The location selected for the camp is a short distance down the Notch road, within easy walk of the Crawford House where the ladies of the family have a room, although their days are spent at the tent. From this point excursions are made in all directions, every known point of attraction being visited and others eagerly searched for. One day they make the ascent of Mt. Washington, the ladies going up by rail and the boys taking the Crawford bridlepath. Another they climb Mt. Willard to enjoy the magnificent panorama spread out below, and one day the boys take part in an exciting but unsuccessful bear hunt. The author has interwoven with his story many of the local traditions of the mountains, and his descriptions of the natural scenery of the region are so vivid and accurate that one who has gone over the same ground almost feels as if the book were a narrative of real occurrences. Like the first volume of the series, *The Tent in the Notch* is capital reading, even for old folks. To the boys and girls who expect to make the mountains a visit this summer, it is, aside from its interest as a story, as good as a guide book, and what they will learn from its pages will add greatly to their enjoyment.

OVER SEAS: or, Here, There, and Everywhere. Ill Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. Twenty-one bright, sparkling sketches of travel and sight-seeing make up the contents of this handsome volume, which every boy and girl will delight to read. The various stories are all by popular authors, and cover adventures in Italy, Germany, France, and other countries of Europe, China, Mexico, and some out of the way corners of the world where travellers seldom get, and which young readers know little about. They are full of instructive information, and the boy or girl who reads them will know a great deal more about foreign countries and the curious things they contain than could be gained from many larger and more pretentious books. The volume is profusely illustrated.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE YOUNG FOLKS' BIBLE HISTORY. By Charlotte M. Yonge. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. The present volume is not only important in itself, but it is an additional proof of the wonderful versatility of the author. The same hand that so successfully set before young readers the stories of the growth and development of the different countries of Europe, here puts the grand old Bible story into a form which the youngest readers can easily comprehend. The language is simple and the facts are told in modern style; one great stumbling-block to the understanding being thus removed. Beginning with the account of the creation, succeeding chapters carry along the Scriptural record to the time of the prophets, and from their day down to the appearance of the Saviour upon the earth. The life and teachings of Jesus are especially dwelt upon. The volume is profusely illustrated with drawings by English artists. We cannot too cordially commend the plan of this work, nor the excellent manner in which it is carried out. It will be found not only valuable for home teaching, but for use in the infant classes of Sunday-schools.

The *New York Tribune* in a notice of Amanda B. Harris's "How We Went Birds'-nesting" says: "It is written with charming simplicity of style, and its ornithology is taken directly from nature and not from books. There is something of the spirit of adventure in the book, and as the youthful reader of dime novels is filled with a desire to go out West and hunt Indians, so the boys and girls who read this little volume will be prompted to visit the haunts of the birds and will have their powers of observation directed and sharpened."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE ROSSETTI SHAKESPEARE. Edited by W. M. Rossetti. With an Essay on the Chronology of Shakespeare, by Edward Dowden, LL.D. A History of the Drama in England in the Time of Shakespeare, by Arthur Gilman, M. A. A Critical Introduction to each Play, by A. W. Von-Schlegel. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$3.50. A good edition of Shakespeare is a necessity in every household where the English language is read or spoken, and a thorough acquaintance with its contents is equal to a liberal education. It is a liberal education, for it teaches what the text books of all the schools do not; it broadens the mind, fires the imagination, quickens the sympathies and shows us all the secret springs of humanity. Multitudes of editions are before the public for their choosing; some carefully edited; some badly edited, and some not edited at all. Some are too cumbrous for common use, and on some the printers have bestowed such profuse adornment that they are fitter to lie untouched upon the centre table than to be handled by the ordinary reader. Among the absolute requisites for a popular edition of Shakespeare the first and greatest is correct editing, and this can only be accomplished by one who has made the poet a life study. Then it should be clearly printed, strongly bound and of convenient size. All these requisites are combined in the present edition. In addition to the contents mentioned in the title it includes an Essay on Shakespeare's indebtedness to the Bible; a List of early Editions to Shakespeare's Plays; an Index to Noteworthy Scenes; an Index to all the Characters; a list of the Songs in the Plays; an Index to familiar Quotations, and a carefully prepared Glossary, Shakespeare's Will, etc.

FLOWERS OF THE FIELD AND FOREST. By Rev. A. B. Hervey. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$6.00. Many readers will remember *Beautiful Wild Flowers* and *Beautiful Ferns*, compiled by the same author, which were among the most attractive gift books of last year. This elegant volume is brought out in companion style, with fourteen exquisitely colored plates, the subjects of which were designed by Isaac Sprague, who was for a long time associated with Audubon in his great work. Too much cannot be said in praise of the manner in which the book is presented to the public. It is a large quarto, elegantly bound in cloth, and full gilt.

