

# The Home Mission Journal.

A record of Missionary, Sunday-School and Temperance work, and a reporter of church and ministerial activities and general religious literature. Published semi-monthly.

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Rosecroft.

BY CHARA BROUGHTON CONANT.

## CHAPTER VII.

It was the first time such tender, motherly words had fallen upon the poor girl's ears. Tears rushed to her eyes again, rolled down her cheeks; it was all she could do to keep from sobbing aloud.

"Oh, you are just as kind as can be!" she managed to bring out, after a glance in the sweet, sincere face. "But there's something you don't know about. You would never want Rags, and he'd die without me, poor little fellow!"

"Who is Rags, Eliza?" asked the dismayed Miss Hathaway, the thought crossing her mind that this eccentric girl had perhaps adopted some little street-urchin.

"It's my dog, my poor little dog!" said Eliza, dashing away her tears, as she sprang to the window, and threw it open. "Here, Rags, my boy!"

Rags, who had been for some time, under the window, whining, barking, jumping up against it at intervals, only to be warned away by his young mistress, now bounded in, in an ecstasy of joy and excitement. He was an ugly, shaggy little fellow, of the terrier family, though not of the purest breed.

"Mercy on us!" screamed Mrs. Honeywell, climbing upon a chair with more agility than might have been expected from so stout a woman, "what a dreadful little dog! Turn him out, Eliza, turn him out this minute!"

"Rags! come here, sir!" exclaimed Eliza, for the dog, who had been leaping upon and caressing his young mistress, now made a sudden rush for Mrs. Honeywell. Her shrieks redoubled, while Rags, thinking all this excitement great fun, bounded around her chair, barking furiously, and evading with great dexterity the thrusts she made at him with her parasol. But in an instant more, Eliza had captured him, and with two or three heavy cuffs, brought him to submission. Gertrude and G'ady's, who had sought in vain to reassure their aunt for the social Rags was no stranger to them, now helped the trembling lady down, trying not to laugh, while Maud eyed the scene in silent disdain of Eliza, the dog, and Mrs. Honeywell. Poor Aunt Diantha stood mute but trembling, while Mrs. Sheldrake, who, beligerent woman though she was, had a morbid terror of dogs, had retreated behind a table. Feeling that she had not distinguished herself, she spoke out with all the more severity when Eliza had finally quieted the dog.

"So that is the charming pet you can't bear to be parted from, that ugly, vicious little cur! But it's just what we might have expected from a peculiar girl like you! I think both my sisters will agree with me that you can't saddle that hideous little beast upon anybody who has charge of you, and that he had better be quickly chloroformed; it would be a kindness to the dog, I'm sure, as well as to everybody else concerned."

"Chloroformed indeed!" exclaimed Eliza, glaring at Mrs. Sheldrake from where she stood beside the dog. "Oh, it's too much! I never saw such a hard-hearted woman as you! Chloroform my dog, the only creature that loves me, the only thing I have to love in all the world! Rags, be quiet, sir!" for the little fellow, quite aware that Mrs. Sheldrake was making a personal attack upon him, broke into a savage bark, stifled immediately by Eliza. But he continued to show his teeth at Aunt Minerva, uttering a resentful growl at intervals.

"And how can you expect people to love you, you disagreeable, impertinent girl!" exclaimed

Mrs. Sheldrake. "Daring to call me names! If I were your Aunt Diantha——"

"There, be quiet, Eliza, my poor child!" said Miss Hathaway, in whose heart a sharp struggle had been going on since the dog appeared upon the scene. The gentle little lady bent down and laid a soft, unglowed hand somewhat timidly upon Rags' shaggy head. "Do you really love this little dog so much?" she went on soothingly. To her surprise, Rags began to lick the kind hand raising his eyes gratefully to the lady's sweet face. The defiant light in Eliza's eyes was quenched in tears, as she said in a half-sobbing voice:

"Love him! Oh, Aunt Diantha, you don't know what he's been to me! Look here—I bought him two years ago from some boys who were going to drown him, and he's been the dearest, most faithful little friend to me ever since! He goes with me everywhere, he sleeps in my room at night, he understands everything I say to him—and he's not an ugly, vicious dog—he was only making fun with Aunt Gertrude; and you see how he likes you—he likes those who are kind to him. It would break my heart to part with the little fellow, and even if he wasn't killed or allowed to starve, I believe he'd pine away for me! Oh, I'm not saying this to get you to take him—that would be asking too much I know. But if you'll only help me to carry out the plan I spoke of, please be my guardian, and have things settled that way! and when I'm older, and have a good position, I'll do lots for you, Aunt Diantha. You won't let Rags be taken from me—you are too kind, I know."

A great sob choked her voice. Rags, who seemed to understand everything that was going on, made a peculiar, melancholy sound that seemed almost a repetition of the sob, then suddenly sat up upon his hind legs, and reached out a supplicating, shaggy little paw to Aunt Diantha. Everybody laughed and felt softened toward the dog except that cold-hearted child Maud, who wondered anybody could make such a fuss over that ugly little beast! Mrs. Sheldrake felt touched in spite of herself, and somewhat ashamed of her hard words to Eliza.

As for Miss Hathaway, Rags' supplicating gesture would have settled the matter, even if the kind-hearted little lady had not already made up her mind. Laughing softly through her tears, she took Rags' proffered paw, and put the other arm around Eliza.

"Come, come, I'll settle matters far better for you than that. You've quite won my heart, you dear, warm-hearted child, and your little Rags, too. There's room enough for you both at Rosecroft and you must come with me."

Eliza's face flushed again with mingled astonishment and rapture, yet she hesitated a moment.

"Oh, Aunt Diantha! It's too much to ask of you!"

"Not a bit. It'll do your Auntie good to have some young life in the cottage, and Rosie, too. Only 'with another silvery laugh, 'you must teach Rags not to be so Rollo!' Then her heartfelt gratitude overcoming her natural reserve and shyness; she threw her arms around Miss Diantha's neck, and hid her face upon her shoulder, while Rags, unheeded, jumped about them somewhat jealously, trying to kiss each in turn.

"Oh, you are the best, the kindest woman!" murmured Eliza: "I'll do everything you tell me. I'll never make you sorry for this; no, nor Rags either!"

(To be Continued.)

### In God's School.

Sooner or later we find out that life is not a holiday, but a discipline. Earlier or later we will discover that the world is not a playground. It is quite clear that God means it for a school. The moment we forget that, the puzzle of life begins. We try to play in school. The Master does not mind that so much for its own sake, for he likes to see children happy; but in our playing we neglect our lessons. We do not see how much there is to learn, and we do not care. But our Master cares. He has a perfectly overpowering and inexplicable solicitude for our education; and because he loves us, he comes into the school sometimes and speaks to us.

### After Enthusiasm is Gone

There are times in every life when the soul stands on the clear heights, and no task seems to be too difficult to the boundless enthusiasm of the moment. But what is to be done when the soul has descended into the plains, and the enthusiasm is gone, and the task remains? Only to go on bravely, trusting to the clearer vision on the mountain-top, and making faithful performance fill the place of enthusiasm. The mountain and plain has each his place in Christian life—the mountain for the clear vision ahead, the lowly road along the plain for the actual performance of the journey.—Sunday-School Times.

### Life Indeed.

God has been wrestling with you patiently and lovingly for many years. He has sought by the prosperity and happiness that he has sent you to make you conscious of his tender love and care and to draw you to Him by the cords of gratitude. And when you failed to perceive Him in the daylight, He has met you in the darkness. He has thrown His strong arm around you and still you have not known Him. He has wounded you—He has had to wound you—because you struggled against Him. Can you not now see that it is He? And is it not idle to resist Him? Oh, if men only knew that God is not their enemy, but their best friend! If instead of holding Him off or trying to break away from His embrace, they would cling to Him, as Jacob did, exclaiming: 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!' As soon as that prayer is offered the blessing comes and the morning breaks. There would have been no need of the long struggle if the soul had only yielded sooner to Him whose one supreme desire is to bless and save it.—Edward B. Coe, D. D., in *Life Indeed*.

### Opposition to Christ

On one occasion a boy, weak in mind, was asked, while rubbing a brass plate on a door, what he was doing, when he replied, "I am rubbing out the name." Little was the boy aware that the more he rubbed the more it shone. So it is with those who seek to oppse Christ; the more His truth and power are called in question, the brighter they shine.

### THE ERVINE FUND.

The following amounts have been contributed on this fund since September last:

Rev. R. M. Bynon,	\$1 00
Mrs. Joseph E. Miller,	.50
Samuel Barton,	.25
L. R. Hetherington,	1 00
Willis C. Newcomb,	2 00
Mrs. E. A. Brauscombe,	2 00
Geo. H. Briggs,	1 00
Mrs. Rachel Bonnell,	1 00
Mrs. K. M. Titus,	.50
Mrs. Jas. Kennedy,	.50
Oswald Barton,	1 00
Hopewell Cape Sunday School,	5 00
C. W. Newcomb,	2 00
Miss Nettie Secord,	1 00
Mrs. Duncan McIntyre,	1 00
Wm. Noddin,	1 00
Wm. Lewis,	.50
Hillsdale and Fairfield,	15 00
<b>Total,</b>	<b>\$36 25</b>

The last report from Bro. Ervine's family is touching indeed. Readers of the JOURNAL no doubt remember that he is residing at San Jacinto, California, whither he went in search of health. His second little boy has had to undergo a pain-