

mother all her own, and you can't think how she thanks you for giving her up. We will have some games, and some music and some "party" (that's what I used to call the ice cream!) and then you shall go all together and take Jessica to Phoebe, never to be a travelling doll any more!

It was the merriest party! There were so many stories to be told about Jessica, and her queer fashion of turning up just when and where she was most wanted. Right in the middle of the ice cream, Esther had a sudden thought.

'Miss Cynthia,' she asked, 'how did Jessica know when my playroom was topsy-turvy?'

'And when I bit my nails?' said Nanny.

'And when my poor Cora Belle hadn't anything to wear?' said Ruthie.

Miss Cynthia's eyes twinkled. 'Sometimes a mother tucked a note into Jessica's trunk at the last moment,' she answered, and the little girls cried, 'O!'

Then they all kissed Miss Cynthia, and solemnly kissed Jessica good-by, and marched away with the doll and the trunk and the chair and the cradle to Phoebe's house.

'There won't be a travelling doll any more,' sighed one, as they turned in at Phoebe's gate. 'But I'm glad!' she added resolutely. And when they had told their story and looked at Phoebe's shining eyes, not one of them had room in her heart for a regret.

## A Stump That Made Trouble.

The whole family, counting half a dozen cousins, went on a nutting expedition one afternoon. It was quite a long drive to the grove where the hickory nuts were so plentiful, and on the way they amused themselves with a game which Walter thought great fun. The people on each side of the waggon kept count of all the animals which could be seen on their side of the road, and those who counted up to a hundred first were supposed to beat.

They saw two little girls feeding grass to a meek-faced, spotted calf. They saw horses which were quite inclined to be friendly, and long-legged colts which cantered about for the fun of the thing, without seeming to care where they were going. How the children laughed when they came to a field full of sheep, and the side which counted them stood up in the waggon and tried to find out just how many there were in the scampering flock. Then what a shout of triumph went up from the other side, when the very next turn in the road showed twenty-five or thirty lean black pigs rooting about in the soft dirt and grunting contentedly in the warm fall sunshine.

The people on the left-hand side of the waggon had counted eighty-seven animals, while those on the right, where Walter sat, had only eighty. Then they passed a farmhouse where an old cat with half a dozen kittens lay on the piazza basking in the sunshine, and then the two sides were even. Walter was getting very excited. The right-hand side counted three horses; the left hand passed them with four cows. A little squirrel chattering on the top of the fence tied the score again. Then Walter bounced up and down like a rubber ball when five children came running to the door of a farmhouse on the right and Walter's side counted ninety-nine.

But though victory was so near, it was not certain. Both sides were alert and eager. Then suddenly Walter gave a shout of joy. 'Oh, good! I see a calf lying down in the field! We beat! We beat!'

A few yards further on the road branched, and as they stopped for a moment to decide which turning to take, Walter looked back. He stared hard and rubbed his eyes. The thing they had all mistaken for a calf was only a brown stump, lying on the edge of the wood.

He had opened his lips to announce his discovery when his Cousin John spoke from the other side of the waggon. 'If you hadn't seen that calf, Walter, we'd beaten you sure. I see a whole lot of crows just ahead.'

Walter did not reply. They drove on, and in fifteen minutes had reached the hickory grove. While Walter's mother got the lunch ready the rest of them gathered nuts and readily did wonders in so short a time. At lunch Walter was very silent. 'Are you tired, dear?' said his mother, looking puzzled.

'Aren't you hungry?' asked his father,

'After we're through eating I'll help you gather some more nuts,' said Cousin John. Perhaps Walter felt bad at not getting as many nuts as the older ones.

This kindness from the cousin he had cheated was more than Walter could bear. He choked over his sandwich. 'It wasn't really a calf!' he cried.

'Why, what do you mean?' exclaimed everybody at once.

'The calf we beat with,' explained Walter, hanging his head. 'I looked back again, and it was only a stump.'

'Oh, well, Walter,' cried Cousin John, good-naturedly, 'don't you feel bad about that; such a little thing.'

But Walter's mother checked him with a glance. 'No, John, it isn't a little thing to try to get an advantage dishonestly, but Walter did the best thing he could do when he told us his fault, and I'm sure we all will forgive him.'

After that load was off his heart, Walter enjoyed himself as well as anyone. The day ended as pleasantly as it had begun, and the little boy had learned a lesson that was to help him many times when he had grown older and that day in the woods was only a sweet, faint memory.—Selected.

## 'The Rebel Sigh.'

(Grace Willis, in the 'North Western Christian Advocate'.)

Two young women in tawdry dressing gowns were lounging in rocking chairs reading the Sunday morning paper and discussing the fashion page in loud tones.

Stephanie Southam turned away from the boarding-house parlor in disgust. There was no Sabbathlike atmosphere there, certainly! She retraced her steps, reaching her own room at the top of the stairs, and sat down, discouraged, in the stiff little rocker, contemplating the view from her one window with homesick eyes.

A dingy, three-story boarding house across the street, with soot-laden, ragged lace curtains at the windows, confronted her. A chilly rain pattered on the tin roof of the porch, just outside her window. She turned away.

Just then a cold draft and a whiff of tobacco smoke came in from the hall below; someone was standing too long at the open front door. She closed her own door—she could at least shut herself in to her own company—when the sudden, loud jangle of a popular tune played on the piano in the parlor jarred upon her ears. That was too much! A girl brought up in a Christian home, as she had been, with all its sweet, helpful, refining influences, had a right to better things, even though obliged to leave that home and work in a strange city. It seemed quite unjust to her. Why had it so happened, anyway, that she had to leave that dear home! She felt just a little as if Providence had been neglectful. Those who had known no better might wish for no better, but she—it was too hard.

She must get away from this atmosphere, even though it took her out in the rain. There was a vesper service for girls and women not many blocks away, to which she occasionally went, and thither she turned her steps.

Only two or three had gathered. Even the pleasant room seemed gloomy, with the rain beating against the windows, and the spirit of discontent seemed to have taken possession of Stephanie.

Others came in, shook out their damp coats, and sat down quietly.

The leader was one of those wise, strong women who knew how out-of-sorts girls feel when they are homesick, and in a cheery voice she announced the hymns, and kept them singing for some minutes.

Through the blessed influence of Christian song, Stephanie's heart softened. After all, her lot was not so hard.

Sweetly the girlish voices sang:

'Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;

Win it from earth; through all its pulses move;

Stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art,

And make me love thee as I ought to love.'

Stephanie's heart was getting in tune once more.

'Teach me to feel that thou art always nigh

Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,  
To check the rising doubt—'

Ah, she scorned to doubt; she whose father had been a pillar in the church, and his father before; whose mother was a saint. Doubt? She who had generations of stanch Christianity back of her? Ah, never!

'To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh.'

The remainder of the song she did not hear. Her sighing and complaining had been rebellion against God. The pity of it! God, who was so good to her, so full of tender compassion, who had so led her all her days—and now even, in a strange, lonely city, when full of murmuring, had led her to this place, this quiet place where he was. Ah, thank God!

The meeting outwardly was but a commonplace one. There were no great manifestations, no wonderful experiences related, but one girl, at least, went away with new courage, new strength, and a determination to 'check the rebel sigh' which was eating away the joy of her Christian life like a cankerworm.

With such thoughts, it was not strange that the girls in the boarding-house parlor looked at her shining face as she passed the open door, and asked, wonderingly, 'Where've you been?'

She saw the shabby parlor and the loud voiced, thoughtless girls with new eyes. Here was something for her to do. Why should she complain against the surroundings when she did nothing to better them? The days to come should be full; she would no longer sit and complain.

She thanked God that night, though the cold rain still pattered on the tin roof, for the place in which her lot had been cast, and most of all that her eyes had been opened to the blessed privileges awaiting her.

'God Has Given Us Four Books'—The Book of Grace, the Book of Nature, the Book of the World, and the Book of Providence. Every occurrence is a leaf in one of these books. It does not become us to be negligent in the use of any of them.—'Cecil.'

## A New Year's Greeting.

The New Year number of the 'Canadian Pictorial' is a mid-winter souvenir. It depicts many of the phases of that out-door life of the opening months of the year that are so typically, as well as exclusively Canadian. Out-door sports and out-door labor are illustrated and give a crisp snappy atmosphere to the whole issue. The man of the month is the newly-installed Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, the Hon. J. W. Gibson. The new fiction department has a remarkable feature in a story which secured the first prize of \$1,500 in a New York competition this month. It will well repay reading, and it is published by special arrangement. The doings of the world are represented by striking scenes in distant parts of the British Empire, as well as under the flags of other nations. In the department devoted to feminine interests will be found an article on New Year gifts of 'ye olden tyme' that will surprise almost everybody. The musical offering of the month is one of those English rollicking songs that everybody can learn.

If you get the 'Messenger' through your Sunday-school, but would like to take the 'Pictorial,' why not try the 'Weekly Witness and Canadian Homestead' and the 'Canadian Pictorial' one year each for ONLY \$1.35, our regular club offer for these two splendid publications?

Or, if you wish the 'Pictorial' alone, use the following coupon and you can have a ONE DOLLAR paper for only seventy-five cents (.75c).

## COUPON.

John Dougall & Son, 'Witness' Block, Montreal.

Enclosed find seventy-five cents (.75c) which with this coupon will pay for a year's subscription to the 'Canadian Pictorial' (regular rate, \$1.00), according to special offer made to 'Messenger' readers.

Name.....

P. O. ....

Date..... Prov.....