

dear heart, never fear, and it will be infinitely better than preaching to a divided people."

"Yes, it will be better," she agreed; and then they listened to the clock.

The little church at Saxon had its feud. It had brought it a certain kind of fame in all the countryside. Other churches pointed to it with indulgent pity. Strangers over in Krell and Dennistown were regaled with entertaining accounts of how the Saxon congregation was divided by the broad aisle into two hostile factions, and no man stepped across.

"It's the dead-line," chuckled the Krell newsmonger-in-chief. "Nobody but the minister dares go across! Those for the Cain side sit on one side of the aisle and those for the Drinkwater side sit on the other. The gallery is reserved for neutrals, but it's always empty! They make it terrible hard for their parson over there in Saxon."

The Krell newsmonger was right. It was terribly hard for the minister at Saxon. For eight years he and his gentle wife had struggled to calm the troubled waters, but still they flowed on turbulently. Still there was discord, whichever way one turned. Another congregation might have separated further than a broad aisle's width long ago, and worshipped in two churches instead of one. But the Saxon congregation had its own way of doing things. Its founders had been original, and generation after generation had inherited the trait.

Midway in the week preceding Easter, Julius Taft came into the little parsonage nursery, with signals of fresh distress plainly hoisted.

"Well?"

Rebekah Taft stopped rocking and waited. The baby in her arms lurched toward the tall figure in the doorway joyously.

"Well, Julius?"

"Please, ma'am, may I come in and grumble, ma'am? I'm 'that' full I can't hold in! Here, give me the youngster. What do you suppose has happened now, little woman?"

"The church has blown up!" Rebekah answered naively.

"Not yet, but the fuse is lighted. I've just found out about the Easter music. I hoped they would not have any."

"Oh, Julius, so did I! It will be sure to make trouble."

"It's made it already. That's it! I've just found out that Mrs. Cain is drilling her little Lethia to sing an

Easter song; you know she has a beautiful little voice."

"Yes, oh, yes, as clear as a bird's. Why, won't it be beautiful to have her sing, Julius?"

"Because Mrs. Drinkwater is drilling Gerry to sing," the minister said dryly.

"Oh!"

"And it won't be a duet, little woman."

"No—what will it be, Julius?"

"The Lord only knows, Rebekah."

They both laughed, and the shrill crow of the baby chimed in. Only the baby's laugh was mirthful. The minister's worn face sobered quickly.

"I don't know how it will come out," he sighed. "They are both very determined and the hostile feeling is so strong. I wish it might have held off a little longer—till you and I got back to the smithy, dear!"

Out in the orchard, back of the parsonage, a little rabble of children was collected together. The two factions that pertained among their elders were distinctly visible there. Two well-defined groups of youngsters stood aloof, eying each other with familiar scorn. Between the two groups, midway, the minister's two little children stood, apparently in a conciliatory mood.

"Let's play meeting," suggested Julius Junior, the paternal mantle on his small, square shoulders. "I'll preach."

"Oh, do let's!—we're so sick of playing battle," urged Kathie, eagerly. Battle was the favourite play, presumably on account of the excellent opportunities it offered the opposing parties.

"Sit down on the grass—there's a good place. This rock's my pulpit," bustled the little minister, importantly, and the children scurried into place. It was noteworthy that a broad aisle of soft clover heads and timothy set apart the rival factions. On either side squatted the divided congregation.

Julius Junior's little lean brown face assumed a serious expression. He stood awhile in deep thought. Then his face brightened.

"I know! I'll preach you an Easter sermon!" he cried, softly. "That will be very ap-pro-perate, because Sunday is Easter, you know. Now, I'll begin. My text to-day is—is—I know!—'Peace on earth, good-will to men.' That's it: 'Peace on earth, good-will to men.'"

It was cool and still in the orchard behind the parsonage. The rows of