

## How Johnnie Learned To Wipe His Feet.

"Did you wipe your feet, Johnnie?"

"No, mamma; I forgot."

"Run back and do it, then, please."

"Yes, mamma."

There was a prolonged and energetic scraping and rubbing of two obedient feet on the hall rug.

"Mamma, won't you tell me why you have to wipe your feet every time you come into the house?"

"Yes, if you cannot find out yourself."

Johnnie looked interested. Mamma always let him find out things for himself when he could. He had found already that there was always a reason behind her commands, and he enjoyed hunting for it.

"Where can I begin?"

"Well, walk all around the rooms, and, when you are near the beginning place, I'll say, 'Warm!'"

That was just like mamma, and Johnnie knew he was going to have a good time. He went through the two parlors, but mamma was silent. Johnnie was watching her over his shoulder, and hardly knew when he crossed the threshold into the library.

"Warm!" cried mamma suddenly.

Johnnie halted promptly, and looked all about him.

"Don't look too high for the reasons of things," said mamma with a smile, as Johnnie, not budging an inch, stood rolling his eyes up towards the ceiling.

"Warmer!" as the little lad began to look toward the floor.

"Oh, I spy!" said Johnnie suddenly. And he picked up a big cake of dry mud from the carpet. "I've found out, mamma!"

"That is one reason, but there are others."

"In the house, mamma?"

"Yes, but you can't see them just yet."

"Why can't I see them now, mamma?"

Mamma laughed, and gave Johnnie a kiss. Then she handed him pencil and paper.

"I will write a question on this paper, and you may have until to-morrow night to answer it. 'What makes mud?'"

"Huh! that's easy! Water and dirt!"

"Yes. Write it this way: 'What makes mud?' 1. Moisture. 2. Dirt. Write down everything that you see dropped and left on the sidewalk or in the street. If it is wet, like water, put it under 'Moisture'; if not, put it under 'Dirt.'"

"O mamma, what a nice play!"

Johnnie moved over to the window.

"Hullo, here's the sprinkler! Do you spell water, with an 'a' or an 'o,' mamma?"

"W-a-t-e-r," said mamma, without a smile. She never laughed at Johnnie's mistakes, and that was what made Johnnie think she was "lots nicer'n other boys' mamas."

Presently the city carts came along to gather up the garbage. The barrels were heavy, and the men, to save lifting them, emptied the contents upon the street, and then shovelled it into the carts. They left a good amount behind them, however, and Johnnie got quite excited over trying to write down all the different things he saw remnants of. Mamma suggested that "garbage" would cover it all, so Johnnie, after much wrinking of his forehead and twisting of his tongue, wrote "Gobbage," for mamma was called away just then.

The ashman came down the street, and he, too, tipped over the barrels, and shoveled the ashes into the cart—all but what blew away; for the wind was high, and a large part of every shovelful went flying all over the street.

Mamma was gone a long time, but, when she returned, Johnnie called her to the window.

"I don't know how to say things, mamma. There are the sewer men cleaning out sewers, and they spill the dirty stuff on the street. Then a wagon went by full of old bones and meat from the market, and some of that dropped from the cart. Then there are the horses and dogs and cats. I saw a dog go by with blood dripping from his ear, and the men spit on the sidewalk—and O, mamma! I don't think mud is nice; do you?" And Johnnie's little nose was all puckered up with disgust.

"No, Johnnie."

Mamma smiled meaningly.

"O mamma! I've found out already; haven't I, mamma?"

"Draw two circles of the same size on your paper."

So Johnnie got the compasses which mamma had given him for a birthday present—they had so many circles to draw that mamma taught Johnnie to do it scientifically—and drew two circles, each about an inch across.

"Put eleven dots in one. Just scatter them about anywhere. Now put two hundred dots in the other."

"My, what a lot for that little circle!"

"Now, suppose that every dot is a grain of dust. Would you rather breathe air with eleven grains of dust in it, or air with two hundred grains in it?"

"I guess the two hundred grains would choke us—don't you, mamma?"

"That depends. Will you close the blinds to that front window, where the sun shines so bright?"

When the blinds were closed, mamma hung a dark cloth over the window, and cut a little hole in it right over a crack in the shutters, so that the bright sunlight came through in a long pencil of light. Then Johnnie saw myriads of little dust particles, so small that he had not known they were there until the strong sunlight lit them up.

"You see, Johnnie, the mud and dirt brought into the house are ground up fine by our feet, and then set moving about in the air by the movements of people and the draughts through the room. The more mud brought in, the more dust for us to breathe. Now that you know what mud is made of, you can see that it is not very good stuff to take into our lungs."

"O mamma! you won't have to tell me to wipe my feet any more. I'll do it every time, if I don't forget."

Just then mamma took a little red note-book from her work-basket, and wrote something in it. Johnnie thought she wrote down his promise. Mamma did that sometimes, and had a queer way of letting Johnnie look over her note-book about the time when he had failed to keep his word. To-day, however, she wrote:

"Get a good microscope for Johnnie's Christmas present. If he forgets to wipe his feet, show him the dangers of dust."

EDITOR.

J. B. MORGAN.

Kindly address all communications for this department to Rev. J. B. Morgan, Aylesford, N. S. To insure publication, matter must be in the editor's hands on the Wednesday preceding the date of the issue for which it is intended.

## Prayer Meeting Topic—December 11th.

B. Y. P. U. Topic—A Sad Sight and our Duty in View of it. Matthew 9:26; 10:1.

## Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, December 12.—Jeremiah 13:1-14. Israel's limit to God's goodness. (vs. 11). Compare Mark 16:16. Tuesday, December 13.—Jeremiah 13:15-27. The permanency of habit. (vs. 23). Compare Luke 18:23, 24. Wednesday, December 14.—Jeremiah 14:1-12. Do we make God a stranger? (vs. 8). Compare Rev. 3:20. Thursday, December 15.—Jeremiah 14:13-22. The all powerful is our God. (vs. 22). Compare Ps. 147:5, 8. Friday, December 16.—Jeremiah 15. The rebel deals with God alone. (vs. 1). Compare Ezek. 14:14. Saturday, December 17.—Jeremiah 16. A final verdict. (vs. 21). Compare Amos 5:8.

## Prayer Meeting Topic—December 11th.

"A Sad Sight and our Duty in View of it." Matthew 9:26; 10:1.

In our reference two of the most pathetic scenes in our knowledge are used to describe the helpless condition of humanity and the wasting and blight of character, which ought to be saved for noble uses in the Kingdom of God. Sheep without a shepherd, frightened, scattered, running into danger, torn by thorn and bramble, or falling into death over high precipices. A field of grain, full and ripe, bending and swaying with the promise of food, yet neglected, ungathered, and in danger from early frost and the scourge of relentless winter. There is nothing so sad as loss—loss of time, opportunity, life.

In these pictures Christ seeks to bring before our minds the great needs of the world. And it is strange that we should require any such instruction, since we witness almost hourly the misery and unhappiness of mankind. Everyday familiarity, in very many of us, produces only indifference and insensibility. Jesus knew that Christian men would look upon the grave situation with complacency, and at times seem regardless of the blighting power of sin; that the torture of souls would be unheeded by them; and so in these words he appeals to our hearts and seeks to have us understand our responsibility in the matter.

How sad the condition of humanity! Ignorance, superstition and sin seem to prevail. One need not be a pessimist to say that experience with and knowledge of men and the world cannot bring any other conclusion. Dissipation, misery and shame mark the progress of this age, notwithstanding the many factors at work for the world's uplifting. Everywhere we witness the fact that humanity without Christ is lost. These words of Jesus were spoken with special reference to the Jews who had wandered from God, yet they are suitable to our times and are given that we may realize our duty in view of the sad circumstances of life. All men are lost without Christ. "As sheep having no shepherd." He came to be the Shepherd, to guide and lead to higher life and enjoyment. Without are destitution, poverty, danger and death.

As members of Christ's church how necessary it is that we have a keen consciousness of the world's need. Do we see the misery of men? Do our ears catch the cry of despair from godless men and women? If so, how does it affect us? The lesson says, that Jesus was "moved with compassion." His whole inner being was flooded with pity and love. Is such the character of our feelings and the sentiment of our lives? Or, do we pass the unfortunate with a sneer of contempt, and wrap our robes of self-righteousness closer about our sacred selves? Our relation to this problem is easily determined. We must have the same spirit of Christ—a spirit of compassionate pity and a willingness to help. We are responsible before God for the salvation of men until we have done our utmost to save them. We know the Christ and his power to uplift. Knowledge confers responsibility, and responsibility imposes obligation.

There ought to be an intense sympathy. You must love souls if you would save them. Get near enough to the unfortunate to understand and love them. We are trying to save men by keeping far from them. We cannot reach the masses by going into selfish isolation. Sympathy is a fellow feeling, and in our work among sinners, we must remember that out of the same pitfalls our own feet were "dugged," and placed upon "the Rock, Christ Jesus." True, we must keep ourselves "unspotted from the world." Yet this does not imply that we must become monks or nuns. The Christ-spirit leads us to come into closer touch with men, that we may relieve their misery and distress. Out of such sympathy have grown thousands of institutions for the elevation of mankind, hospitals, orphanages, rescue homes, Florence missions and Mariner's Bethels.

In discharging our duty toward the destitute we must be very practical. Each day brings opportunity to help in some way, the suffering souls of the world. It may be a friend, or acquaintance, or a stranger; an aged or tired one almost ready to despair, or only a little child who has chanced to cross our path—a child to whom childhood gives no sunshine or flowers—and each will

bear with him in his life the mark of our fidelity to trust or our neglect of plain duty.

But we must ever remember that Jesus is the source of our spiritual power and help. As long as we draw from the stream our power will never be scant. There is no case of sinfulness which cannot be cured by appeal to the Christ-power. He gives wisdom and genius for the work and promises that his "grace is sufficient." "He gave them power," and such as have the Holy Spirit in them are able to meet all the misery of the world and relieve it. God in us, and for us, and with us—what power, security, fellowship! Toiling in the fields is made a light and happy task, with Christ to labor with us and we with him, certain of the glorious harvest, when souls shall be gathered for heaven.

"So do I gather strength and hope anew,  
For well I know thy patient love perceives,  
Nor what I did, but, what I tried to do,  
And though the full ripe ears be sadly few,  
Thou wilt accept my sheaves."

Scripture References: Job 6:14; Psalm 35; Proverbs 14:21; 19:17; Romans 12:4-10; 2 Corinthians 11:29; Galatians 6:2; Colossians 3:12-17; Hebrews 4:15-16; 13:1-3; James 1:27; 1 Peter 3:8.—J. J. PARSONS, in Baptist Union.

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