

Her Day's Message.

(By Rhodes Campbell.)

Alica Wyndham rested in her invalid chair by the broad window that Sunday morning with a heart out of tune with the peace and beauty of the day. She who had been the active member of the household, the minister's 'right hand,' the strong, the capable, sat here a useless invalid. The doctor had said, 'she might be about in a year,' but even if she was, Alica knew it would not be as of old; and then a year, which had heretofore seemed to fly past her on wings, so full were the days, now seemed endless tied to a bed. The most painful thought to Alica was the fact of her rebellion against it all; she who had fancied herself an earnest Christian, an obedient child of God. The church bells rang out clearly, but to Alica they only brought to mind her enjoyment of her large Sunday-school class of young girls, and of all they meant to accomplish in fetes and musicals, the proceeds of which were to refurnish the scant library and reading room belonging to the church.

Unable to bear her thoughts, Alica snatched up the paper nearest at hand. Her eye fell on the legend for Sunday: 'When God finds a man who wants to do good, he fills his pathway with opportunities.'

It seemed to the restless nature a cruel taunt, and dash of cold water. She longed to do good, and what opportunities had she now? And then Miss Wyndham's pale face flushed as a sudden remembrance came to her. She grew quieter as she thought; her life had hitherto been too crowded for much thought. Her mother came from church to her side with her anxious face.

'It's so afraid you've had a sad morning,' she said; but her daughter smiled, actually smiled, for the first time since her illness.

'No, I've had a nice time, though it hasn't been exactly consoling,' she said, enigmatically. 'Mother,' she added suddenly, 'I've just been thinking of that sewing you've never had time to finish. I could do it.'

Her mother's face brightened, then fell. 'But you don't like to sew, Alica, and it would tire you,' she said.

'Not a bit of it, and I can do a little at a time when I'm propped up with pillows. I shall begin it to-morrow; all those button-holes and lace to put on will be dainty work.'

The door opened, and a lank, awkward boy entered. It was Ephraim, the 'chore boy.'

'Ephraim,' Alica said brightly, 'I hear you're having a hard time over your arithmetic. I had a splendid teacher who helped me so much! I am sure I can show you how to conquer those dreadful problems.'

Oh, the lighting of the boy's face! It brought a quick flush of shame to Alica's. All these months she had hardly noticed him!

The day was drawing to a close, when Aunt Mehitabel came in with her hard face and keen eyes.

'Well, I suppose you're fretting yourself to death, Alica,' she said, by way of greeting.

'I don't wonder you think so,' Alica replied, with some effort, 'after the way I've been taking this hard lesson. But I'm going to try and not be such a grum old thing, and I want you, auntie, to help me. I've thought of so many things we could do together,' she went on eagerly; 'just listen.'

And as Aunt Mehitabel listened the hard mouth relaxed, her eyes softened. 'Why, Alica, how you do plan things!' she said. 'I'd begun to think I wasn't a mite of use any more; but I believe I could help you.'

And as Alica closed her eyes for the long night she declared that her day's text was

God's message to her, a part of his mighty wisdom. He had given her opportunities all the time, only she had never seen them, or, seeing, had despised them.—'Wellspring.'

India's Bonds

(The Holy Man of India, by the Rev. Norman H. Russell, in 'Presbyterian Record'.)

The religious leader of the masses in India is the Sanyasi or holy man, the religious mendicant of India. Clad in a dusty yellow garment, often naked, but for a loincloth, smeared from head to foot with ashes; with long matted hair, and bleared eyes, for he is a slave to ganja, bhang, and opium, he wanders about the villages, living on the credulity of his superstitious followers.

It cannot be denied that there have occasionally been found redeeming characters among the Sadhus of India, but the ordinary holy man of the villages is cunning, deceitful, impudent and dishonest.

Worse than this may often be charged



against them. The Maharajas, a sect of religious votaries who inculcate the worship of Krishna, were proved in the courts of Bombay to be guilty of the most licentious practices.

Whence then this awful paradox between the name and the character of these holy men? And in the use of this name we get a little light on the difference in meaning of such words as sin, holiness, and salvation, as used in Hindu and English.

In Hinduism, morality is divorced from religion. These men are holy in spite of their character because they are ascetics and practice austerities. One will lie upon a bed of upturned nails, another will hold his hand in the air till it becomes withered and the nails have grown long and curled about the wrist. I have seen one of these men with hundreds of pounds of iron fastened to his body, not able to move but carried about in a strong bed. Others will wear a cage about their necks, or sit and burn in the midst of five fires. Swinging on hooks, piercing the tongue and flesh with knives, are other austerities. And the people really believe such

men to be holy, the very incarnations of God. I have seen one of them come into Mhow and the people erect over him a bower of leaves and flowers, and surround him at night with hundreds of little lamps and then bow before him in worship.

The degrading and superstitious reverence paid to these men could not be better illustrated than by the following list of expenses contracted by wealthy Bombay merchants in connection with the visit of one of these 'holy men,' (The rupee is about one-third of a dollar.)

For homage by sight	Rupees 6
For homage by touch	Rs 20
For the honor of washing the holy man's feet	Rs 35
For the glory of rubbing sweet ungents on his body	Rs 42
For the bliss of occupying the same room	Rs 50 to 500
For the delight of eating pan su- pari thrown away by the holy man	Rs 17
For drinking the water in which he has bathed or in which his foul linen has been washed . . .	Rs 19

To such depths has the idea of reverence been degraded under the leadership of India's holy men.

The Last Dollar.

(By Henry J. Vernon.)

He gave it to his wife with a sigh, yet with a look of resignation.

'It is our last dollar,' he said. 'But the Lord will provide.'

The Rev. James Spring was minister in the little mountain village of Thornville. He was poor, and his congregation was poor. Often before he had been very near his last dollar, but he had never actually got to it until to-day.

'So you've been always saying,' sobbed his wife; 'but what is to become of us when this is gone? They won't trust us any more at the store; and your salary won't be due these three weeks, even if you get it then. Why do you stay here James, when the people are so poor?'

'I have no other place to go to; nor money to travel to it, if the Lord opened a way. My work for the present is here. He feedeth the young ravens; He will surely feed us.'

'I wish I had your faith, but I haven't; and it won't come to me. Oh! what shall we do, what shall we do!' And she wrung her hands despairingly. 'My poor children!'

'Once I was young and now I am old,' solemnly said her husband, speaking in the words of the Psalmist, 'yet never have I seen the righteous forsaken, nor His seed bogging bread.'

As if in answer to this pious ejaculation there came a sudden knock at the door. All the while the minister and his wife had been talking, a storm had been raging outside. On opening the door, a traveller, quite wet through, entered.

'I was coming through the forest from Maryland,' he said, 'and venture to stop at the first house I see. My horse is in the shed. Do I take too great a liberty?'

'Not at all,' answered the master of the house. 'We have but a poor shelter, as you see; but such as it is, you are welcome to it; there is a good fire, at any rate.' For it was in the kitchen where this conversation took place. Indeed, this humble home boasted no parlor, and the kitchen was dining-room, drawing-room, living-room, and all.

The stranger proved to be a man of education, and intelligence, and in conversation with him, the minister forgot his trouble,