

HOW MOLLY LED HIM.

KATE S. GATES.

"O Miss Winslow, I do wish that I could help some one to be a Christian! It must be beautiful; but I never shall, I know," and Mollie sighed despondently.

"Why not?" asked Miss Winslow.

"Why, because I couldn't. I never could say anything, and what could I do to help any one that way?"

"I do not know, Mollie. Perhaps none of us know just which acts of ours may help. We can only do 'ye next thynge' faithfully, and leave the results to Him. It may be we should help all others more if we thought less of doing them good and more of being found faithful in that which is least as well as great. Strive earnestly to do just as you think Christ would want you to do in everything, Mollie, and I feel sure some day you will find that you have helped some one."

Mollie's merry face was unwontedly grave as she bade her Sunday-school teacher good-bye and went her own way alone. There were so many she wanted to help—her brother Tom particularly. She knew mamma and papa were anxious about him; he was beginning to like to go down street evenings, and be round with fellows they did not like. Oh, if she could only help him! But she couldn't; he would never pay any attention to her, she knew.

"Well," she thought rather sadly, "if I cannot help any one, I will try to do as Miss Winslow said, though I think she is mistaken. I could not possibly help any one that way."

Just behind Mollie, unknown to her, was Tom.

"I wonder what the midget is thinking of," he said to himself. "She looks as sober as a deacon. Something to do with that silver cross business, I presume. It won't last long probably; still, the little puss is so sweet and earnest about it now, that it makes me feel ashamed of myself. I shouldn't like to have mother or her hear the boys talk sometimes," and Tom sighed more gloomily than Mollie had.

She had very little idea how closely her brother was watching her; she never dreamed that he saw her efforts to do every little duty faithfully. He was in the kitchen eating apples when she put the oatmeal-pail up only half clean, because she was in a hurry to get out with Annie Smith. He gave a little low whistle when he saw her hesitate, and then take it out and wash it clean. He knew in some way that she gave up going on a little picnic with the girls because she found mamma had planned to go away that day, and could not unless she stayed at home with Robby.

One afternoon when Tom and Molly happened to be at home alone Will and Clara Marshall, who lived across the street, came over to call. Will was home from the city on his vacation, and both Tom and Molly felt rather in awe of him.

"Tell you what it is," he said presently, "let's have a game of cards to pass away the time. Play don't you, Tom?"

Tom colored and hesitated;

"I—know how a little," he said.

"All right! Come on, Mollie! We can show you how in a trice. I've some cards in my pocket."

Poor little Mollie! How her heart beat, and how she did wish that they had not wanted her to play. For one instant she hesitated. What harm could it do to play just once? Will would be sure to make fun of her if she did not, and it was so hard for her to be laughed at. Then she remembered her talk with Miss Winslow. She was to do everything just as she thought Christ would have her. That settled it. He would never have her do what she knew mamma would disapprove.

"I'm sorry, but I can't play cards, Will," she said, bravely. "Mamma does not like them."

Will looked up with a half laugh, but Tom stopped him.

"It is so, Will, and I ought to have been man enough to have said so myself; but if my little sister will brace me up, I'll try to be more courageous hereafter."

"I say, Mollie," said Tom when they were alone, "I want to try with you. Couldn't you take hold of hands and help a fellow along a little?"

"O Tom!" sobbed Mollie. "I am so glad, but I couldn't help you. I would if I could."

"Well, you have; and just keep on, please," answered Tom rather huskily. "You have made me ashamed of myself forty times a day. I haven't been just the kind of fellow I ought to be lately, but I'll turn over a new leaf if I can."

"I'm so thankful," said Molly again; "but, Tom, you must ask God to help you, won't you?"

"Yes," whispered Tom, as he kissed Molly and then ran off up-stairs to his own room.

"O Miss Winslow," said Molly, next Sunday, "it don't seem possible, but Tom says I did really help him just by trying to do everything, even the little bits of things, faithfully, as you said. He says he wouldn't have paid any attention if I had tried to talk to him; but he watched me, and those things made him think I was really in earnest, and now he is trying. Oh, I just can't tell you how happy I am!"

—Zion's Herald.

INDELIBLE INK.

BY MARY J. PORTER.

Mrs. Chesley sat by the bay window of the sitting-room diligently marking handkerchiefs. She had a new steel pen and a small bottle of ink, and was carefully writing the names of various members of the family upon the delicate linen.

Ralph stood by her side, closely watching. "What is that you are writing with, mamma?"

"Indelible ink; that is, ink that cannot be washed out; its marks cannot be destroyed. You see that after writing on a handkerchief I lay it down in the sunshine. The rays of the sun fasten the color of the ink, and after that it cannot be taken off."

"Ting-a-ling-a-ling!" went the front door bell. "A lady for you in the parlor, ma'am," said Bridget, a moment later. Mrs. Chesley laid down her work and left the room. In doing so, she said to Ralph, "You may amuse yourself with your new blocks until I come back."

Ralph meant to get the blocks at once; but unfortunately he stopped for one more look at his mother's work.

The ink bottle stood open still, for in her haste she had forgotten to close it. The pen lay temptingly near. How nice it would be to write just like mamma! Ralph thought he would try to mark one handkerchief. He would put his own name on it. He knew how to spell that.

He had not noticed that mamma wrote only in the corners. Neither had he particularly noticed the size of her letters. So about in the middle of one of the finest handkerchiefs he began printing a large R. He made the first stroke pretty well, but when he came to the curved part of the letter, instead of that he made a big, round blot.

Oh, dear! How he wished he hadn't done it! How he wished he hadn't tried to write at all! How he wished he had been playing with his blocks! He dropped the handkerchief in the sunniest part of the window, and went to the other side of the room to get his toys. Usually he was fond of building houses, towers and castles, but now they seemed to have lost their charm. Instead of the pictures and letters on the blocks he seemed to have that ink blot constantly before him.

Ralph was only a little boy, but he knew that he had done wrong. Mamma would be sorry about the spot, but she would be more sorry to think that her boy had disobeyed. How often she had told him never to touch her work when she was out of the room! She had trusted him to mind her and he had been unworthy of her trust. He was so unhappy over it all that he was positively relieved when he heard the front door close once more and saw mamma coming back into the sitting-room.

"Mamma, I didn't mean to spoil anything; I didn't truly!"

"What do you mean, dear?"

"Well, you see, mamma, I thought I'd write a little,—I thought I could mark like you."

"Ralph, have you been meddling with that indelible ink?" As Mrs. Chesley asked the question, she saw the blot, now growing very black indeed in the bright sunshine.

"Oh, Ralph, I am so sorry! I thought my boy would obey."

"I thought so, too, mamma. I meant to; really I did." Large tears were fol-

lowing one after another down the boy's cheeks, and his voice sounded exceedingly choked.

"Listen to me, Ralph. You have been very naughty. You have disobeyed mamma. That sin is like a great, black spot on the soul of my Ralph. It is far worse than the spot on the handkerchief. Now what will take it away?"

"I'm afraid nothing, mamma."

"Yes, there is something. Don't you remember how I told you the other day about Jesus dying for us? His blood can cleanse us from all our sins. Nothing will make this handkerchief white again. It is hopelessly spoiled. You will have to use it, but every time you do, that blot will remind you how you disobeyed mamma. Yet the spot on your soul can be taken away. I will teach you a short prayer, and then you can go by yourself and say it to God. The prayer is this, 'Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.'"

Ralph repeated the prayer two or three times, in order to be sure that he knew it. Then he went off into a corner and knelt down. Mrs. Chesley heard him whispering the words, and she was sure that the loving Father above would listen to the prayer of a little, penitent boy.

When Ralph returned to her side his tears were gone. He had sinned, but he had been forgiven.—Christian Intelligencer.

MOTIE AND BEAM.

Through the open window came the shrill sound of a woman's voice. It issued from the large apartment house just behind Mrs. Eddy's, and that lady, who was sewing beside her window, hastily closed it, with a deeply disgusted expression upon her face. It was only the reproof of an angry and not especially refined mother to her very likely deserving offspring. She did not swear nor say anything worse than "shut your mouth," which was persistently repeated, but that was sufficiently offensive for Mrs. Eddy. As she closed her window with a bang, she thought: "How can a woman so far forget herself as to screech out in that way and proclaim herself to a whole neighborhood as a common scold! It is shocking even to live in the vicinity of such a virago."

Mrs. Eddy went on with her sewing. In her soul was a virtuous sense of superiority. All was peace in her orderly well-furnished sitting-room. It would indeed be a wicked woman who would scold and storm amid such surroundings.

Suddenly the feet of the children were heard pattering along the hall. The door was burst open and in they rushed.

"Mercy!" cried the eldest girl, "how warm it is in here. I should think you would smother!"

She hurried to the window and threw up the sash. Her mother then, for the first time, perceived that the child had left well-outlined footprints of mud quite across the room. The three other children, who were flocking about the apartment in different directions, were also leaving similar marks upon the carefully swept carpet. The whole peaceful atmosphere of the place was altered.

"Eleanor! You naughty girl!" cried the exasperated mother. "As old as you are, and brought up with such pains! See what tracks you have left! And Harry! You are at it, too! This is disgraceful! The room will have to be all swept over. It seems to be useless to try to bring up children! Here, every one of you go down to the dining-room! Mercy! what a sight this room is!"

Little Mrs. Eddy's voice had risen and risen during her very earnest remarks until she ended well up toward high C.

"Mamma! said little Esther, suddenly, "there are two women over in the windows behind us who are hearing you talk to us."

Mrs. Eddy glanced toward them. One was the very mother whom she had just been despising. Her trials were over for the time, and with a cheerful-looking baby in her arms she was looking hard in Mrs. Eddy's direction. There was an expression of amusement upon her face.

"Those vulgar, annoying creatures!" exclaimed Mrs. Eddy. "Harry, close the window."

"You were speaking a little louder than usual, mamma," said nine-year-old Harry as he sprang to do his mother's bidding.

This was undeniable, and Mrs. Eddy burning with shame, made no comments.

"I'm sorry we brought in so much dirt, mamma," the eldest girl now found courage to say, "I'll take it up myself with the little dustpan and brush."

Her mother murmured vague approval of this proposition, and disposing of the children for their various duties and sports, hid herself in her chamber and fairly wept in the depth of her mortification. She was a Christian woman, highly educated and with refined tastes. Could it be possible that she was as much a "common scold" as the uncultivated and undisciplined woman whom she had mentally condemned? Thousands of excellent women, who may not happen to have had a strong light turned upon them at just the right time, as Mrs. Eddy had happened to, may well ask themselves the same question.—Kate Upson Clark, in the Cumberland Presbyterian.

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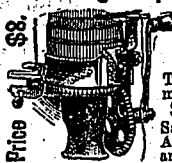
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