

sharply. 'The Sunday School's got to be run, and somebody's got to run it. If the pastor of your church should announce next Sunday that the school would be given up because no one could be found to teach it, there'd be a mischief of a row among you people up on the hill. You'd be ashamed to belong to a church that couldn't support a Sunday School, you know you would. Well, now, this young woman and the rest of them are simply taking the places of those who are not able or willing to do the work, and I say that they deserve a great deal more honor for it than they usually get. We are trying to keep up our end with Miss Dempsey. We have her up to the house often, and my wife and she are great cronies. She has a part in most of our holiday festivities and vacation plans. We never allow a word of criticism of her before Jim, and he understands that his teacher is his parents' friend. I think she knows that we are grateful to her for her interest in our boy; we mean that she shall know it, at any rate. If the little woman'll take all the trouble she's taking for him when, as you say, there's no "have to" about it, his father and mother are going to back her up for all they're worth, now don't you forget it! And they ought!' "

### Our Missionary Barrel.

(By Florinda Twichell, in the 'Ram's Horn'.)

Our Home Missionary Society met at Frank Webb's a few weeks before Christmas. Every one was talkin' about the new minister, and it seemed as if he was givin' universal satisfaction. The sisters wanted to club together and get him a nice Christmas present.

'There ain't a man in the community but will help us, I am sure,' said Cornelia Sims.

The preacher's sister was there, and she spoke up in her quiet way, that every one feels it their bounden duty to listen to:

'I wouldn't do it, sisters. I know my brother wouldn't like it. Someone might be counting it on his salary in the future and when another minister came it might mean a hardship to bring his salary up to the same mark. My brother can live on his salary if it is paid, and I know he would rather anyone would give him some little personal remembrance in a private way, if they wanted to, than to have a subscription circulated. I propose we send a barrel to a frontier minister's family I know. But first I want our secretary to write and ask them what they need. We don't want to send things they can't use.'

Well, we were finally persuaded it would be our best plan to do as she said, but some of the sisters dissented, of course. Mrs. Flint said she believed charity began at home.

'It is not charity,' said sister Webb, 'but just a Christmas gift, because our hearts go out in love for Christ's servant "whom not having seen we love." Just as we love our own pastor, whom we have seen.'

I knew Mrs. Flint would send the minister's family a roll of strong butter or a piece of last year's pork, anyway. And it would give Cornelia Sims a chance to give her annual offering of embroidered slipper tops to the minister.

We wrote to the family out in North Dakota and got the following answer: 'My Dear Society:

'I am Mr. Crosson's daughter. Your kind letter came to-day. As papa and mamma will not be home till Monday, I will answer myself. They have gone to North Creek, where

papa preaches twice a month. Mamma goes to lead the singing when she can. It is fifteen miles and a long, cold ride, but they are having such good meetings, papa says.

'He has three preaching places, one half a mile away, one ten miles and one fifteen. They give him grain for his horse, over at North Creek, and \$50 in money, when they can raise it. Here they give two hundred, if the crops are good and they can get it, and at the other place they give just what they can, sometimes money, sometimes food. Last Sunday they gave papa a new robe for his sleigh.

'We got a barrel last month, and I want



THE STORM COAT.

to tell you about it. I am afraid papa wouldn't want me to, but I guess I will.

'First I will tell you about us children. I am fourteen, will be fifteen in February. Tom is thirteen; he has been out of school all the fall working for a neighbor. It makes me feel bad, for Tom is smart, and I was reading the other day that it cost more for a minister to live because he felt bound to educate his children.

'Then there is Ben, eleven, and Arthur, six, and little Zoe is four.

'Well, now I will tell you what was in the barrel. All the week we had looked forward to getting it. Ben's shoes were out at the toes and mamma said, "wait till the barrel comes." Papa needed an overcoat so much, too.

'We opened it and all gathered around to see what was in it. First mamma took out an old, faded, blue lawn wrapper with elbow sleeves. Papa smiled and shivered a little, but didn't mean we should see. There was a suit of light summer clothes—two sizes too big for papa, a pair of shoes with the soles worn through and buttons off. Ben waited breathlessly, but all there was for a child eleven years old were two summer dresses for a little girl. There were two quite good suits for a boy of four. "You'll grow to them, Zoe," said Tom, laughing. "I expect there will be a party dress my size," and sure enough, there was a white dress, very thin and gauzy, too small for me. But I couldn't have worn it here, anyway.

'There were a lot of old religious papers,

write things for the papers, and tell how the people have to live here.

'Why, I know, a minister's family in the East, before we came here, who had such a beautiful home and nice things. He couldn't preach as well as papa, I know. Papa said Jesus had no home, and I suppose it is all right, but he does need a warm coat and mamma ought to have a dress, and Ben the shoes. We all need them, but Ben isn't well, and he is so pleased with new things.

'Papa is six feet, weighs 179 lbs., and wears No. 8 shoes. Mamma is five feet five inches, weighs No. 4's, weighs 125 lbs. Tom is five feet, weighs 98 lbs., wears No. 5 shoes. Ben is about the size of most boys of nine, and wears No. 13 shoes. Arthur is the usual size of his age, and so is Zoe. I am 5 feet two inches and weigh 120 lbs., wear No. 5 shoes.

'Now, dear society, don't send us more than you can afford, but if you can, send things for winter wear. We all like to read.

'Your friend,

'Lucy Crosson.'

'Well, if that ain't cheeky,' said Mrs. Flint, but we most of us thought it very sensible. The minister read the letter in church, and said we should all meet at his house the next Wednesday and pack the barrel or barrels, as the case might be.

A shoe dealer from Grenville happened to be in the congregation, and he rose and said, 'I'll send over a pair of shoes for each one of the family.'

'Amen,' said old brother Frisby. 'I'll get a new suit of clothes for the little sickly feller.'

Brother Jamison, who keeps dry goods at the settlement, offered underwear at half price.

Mrs. Lewis Elwood, whose husband is rural delivery mail carrier, had a storm overcoat that was too small, good as new, that he gave for the father. We got a nice black dress for the mother and Si Sprague's wife sent her last year's coat.

It was surprisin' how things came in, clothes for everyone, nice and new, mostly. Then the young folks fixed up a box for each child in the family. Brush and comb and ribbons and handkerchiefs and stationery and pen and pencils for Lucy; books and a nice knife for Tom; a box of paints and candy and nuts for Ben; toys and candies and nuts for the little ones. Then we put in a lot of papers and magazines, all fresh and good.

Why! it was the pleasantest work we ever done, and it seemed good to see some of our folks open their hearts and give out what they had hoarded up for years.

Sister Bliven had half a dozen pairs of woollen hand-knit socks she had hoarded up because she couldn't bear to have anybody wear her boy's things after he died. She sent them though. And old Squire Bently, who don't belong to any church, brought over sealed envelopes addressed to each one of the Crossons. Someone found one of them open and saw done up in a lot of silk paper, a five dollar gold piece. We took it for granted that was what was in each one. Well, the Squire is well fixed and hasn't a child to his name.

We sent a letter with the stuff sayin' we didn't put any estimated value upon it, but hoped it would do them some good, and asked them to let us know how the things fitted.

You ought to have seen the answer we got. They was just crazy with joy over everything. Poor little Ben had prayed for the paints, and little Zoe had never had a real



'A PAIR OF SHOES FOR EACH ONE OF THE FAMILY.'

but it happened they were the same papa had been taking.

'Ben cried and I think mamma did, when we were all in bed that night, but I made up my mind when I was old enough, I would

doll before. Then the warm clothes were so much needed.

I hope our folks will not lose the spirit of the thing before another year, and that many others will go and do likewise.

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