

Dreaming and Doing.

'How nice it must be to give up everything for the poor!' thought little Lady Sybil, as she laid down the life of 'Sister Dora,' which she had just finished reading. 'I don't care a bit for grand houses and fine clothes.' Here Sybil gave a contemptuous glance at her pretty dress, with its soft, silk sash and delicate laces. 'And I don't care for good dinners, and I hate parties and dancing; but I am glad to think that I shall be rich when I grow up, because I mean to give up everything—everything to the poor, and live in a little tiny cottage, and just keep enough money to buy the very plainest clothes and food. But I will take care there is always plenty of milk for you, my darling Blackie,' she added, as she fondled a cat who lay comfortably cuddled on her lap, and who gave a sleepy purr in response to her little mistress's caresses, 'and when I come back from visiting the cottages, you will be lying on the hearth waiting for me, and—'

Here Lady Sybil's reveries were interrupted by the entrance of her old nurse, who brought her a note.

'It's from the Hall, my lady, and the groom said he was to wait for an answer.'

Sybil tore open the note, and as she read her face flushed, and at last she exclaimed, in an excited voice, 'Oh, no, no! That's too much to ask! I really can't do that!'

'What is it, dearie?' said the old woman in a sympathizing tone. She had been with Sybil from her babyhood, and loved the little girl for her dead mother's sake as well as her own.

'It's from Aunt Helen,' said Sybil, in a vexed tone. 'She actually wants my Blackie. Ferdinand has another of his brain attacks, and he keeps asking for Blackie; no other pussy will please him, and Aunt Helen says they cannot pacify him, or she would not ask such a great favor from me; but she hopes I will be so very kind as to lend Blackie to her poor afflicted child. I'm very sorry for Ferdie; it must be dreadful to have such headaches, but I really can't give him Blackie—my dear old Blackie!' and Sybil caught up the cat in her arms and pressed her fondly to her cheek.

'Poor little fellow!' said Nurse, softly.

But Sybil did not hear her; she had begun her letter:

'Dear Aunt Helen,—I am so sorry Ferdie is ill again. I hope he will soon be better. He may have any of my toys or games or books; but I really cannot give up Blackie.'

Sybil had written so far, when she suddenly stopped. As she wrote the words 'give up,' it suddenly flashed across her that here was the opportunity she had been longing for. Why wait till she was grown up to give up to the poor when she could give up now, this very minute? Few children, however poor, were, she well knew, more to be pitied than her little cousin, whose whole life was one of sickness and suffering.

Sybil waited no longer; she tore up her letter, and, turning to Nurse, said as gaily as she could, 'Fetch me a hamper, Nurse, dear. If Ferdie wants Blackie, he shall have her.' And though Sybil had to wink very hard to prevent her tears from falling, she was not unhappy, for true unselfishness always brings a real peace to the heart which nothing can destroy.

'It's very easy to be a hypocrite,' thought

the child, as she stood at the window and watched the groom ride quickly down the avenue, with Blackie in a hamper in front of him. 'I was dreaming of how I would like to deny myself of everything for the poor, and then, when I had the chance of doing a kind thing to poor Ferdie, I nearly missed it.'

She turned away as she spoke, for it was time for her lessons; but of all the lessons she learnt that day, perhaps the most valuable was the one she had just found out for herself, that true self-denial consists in giving up that which costs us most.—E. A. B., in 'Sunday.'

Poor Dan's Dream.

A TRUE INCIDENT.

(C. E. L., in the Michigan 'Advocate.')

It was a rather shabbily dressed, uninteresting looking individual of perhaps thirty-five years of age, who came shambling into the little country post-office in P— one cold day in January. The post-mistress, who was familiarly known as Miss Susie, glanced up at him with a kind smile of recognition and said: 'Good morning, Dan,' to which he replied, in a deep guttural tone: 'Mornin', Miss Martin. Purty cold day, ain't it?'

'Yes, Dan,' she replied, 'almost as cold as some people's hearts.'

Dan shackled lazily along to the stove, which was throwing out a very inviting blaze, saying by its crackling and snapping as plainly as words could say, 'Come and warm, come and warm,' which invitation was gladly accepted by him and two gaunt and hungry-looking dogs which followed behind him.

A searching revival of religion was in progress at the little village church, and a deep spirit of conviction was apparent for miles around the country. Dan stood for some moments, with his great hands spread out before the fire, when he shuffled uneasily from one foot to the other, and hesitatingly said to Miss Susie:

'Yer good church folks wouldn't be like to hev a meetin' fer such folks as us, would ye, now?'

Susie, with a look of glad surprise, said: 'Why, Dan, surely we would, and be happy for the chance; this very week, if you like. How would Thursday afternoon suit you?'

'That would do fair. Thank ye, Miss. Me and my woman ain't Christians, but we ain't hathens, nither.'

'We'll look for ye, then.'

That evening Miss Susie told the pastor, my husband, of the promise she had made to poor Dan. An invitation was given to those who had power with God in prayer to meet at the church at the appointed time, to go to the country home.

Thursday came, cold and stormy. There was fine sleighing, however, and quite a company of earnest men and women crowded into a box sleigh, and after a ride of four miles we came to a little one-story house, which had evidently never been honored by a coat of paint. A careworn, tired-looking woman met us at the door, and with a wan little smile greeted us, and led us into a large room, which seemed to serve as sitting-room, bed-room and kitchen combined, and showed signs of extreme economy.

The poor woman limped about the room

(for she was a partial cripple), and made the company as comfortable as her limited means would allow. The boards from the sleigh were brought and placed across the few chairs in the room. When all were seated as far as possible, the pastor commenced the service by reading the old story of the good Shepherd, of the trouble he took to seek the wandering and wayward sheep, which when found he carried in safety to a place of shelter.

As the narration proceeded a spirit of deep earnestness pervaded the room. Here indeed were some souls for whom Christ had given his life. As the good old hymns were sung and the fervent prayers ascended from strong men and sympathetic women, we heard subdued sobs and sighs. Then poor Dan arose, trembling to his feet, and in a broken voice told how his little boy, who had died some months back, came to him in his sleep the night before and talked to him.

'I seen him as plain as I ever did in my life. He said to me, "Pa," says he, "you'd ort to be a Christian. Jesus died for ye and ma, he did. He went down there to teach ye how to live. He left the Bible for ye to read and find yer way to heaven, but ye never go to church, never pray, and O, pa, ye promised to meet me in heaven. O, pa, do give yer heart to Jesus!" and the dear little feller pleaded so, and wouldn't let me go till I promised to give myself up to Jesus. And, friends, me and my woman do want to keep our promise. Pray for us; we are too bad to pray for ourselves. We've broken our promise to our little lad.'

Many of us wept and prayed with the poor afflicted couple, as they wrestled with God for peace. Needless to say, they soon found that for which they sought, and we all rejoiced with them as we left them that dark, stormy afternoon.

As long as we remained on that charge, every Sunday morning, rain or shine, Dan and his lame wife could be seen trudging along the country road to church. Dan in his clean though coarse suit of clothes, his eyes lit up with a new, earnest light, looked every inch a man, while his wife had lost the hopeless, unhappy expression which we first saw in her face. Truly they were an inspiration to both pastor and people, for they drank in every word of the sermon as if it were indeed the 'water of life' to them.

O church of Christ, how often might such scenes be repeated if we were looking for the Spirit's manifestation. It is Christ's delight to transform the hearts and homes of men. Let us feel the responsibility resting upon us, and be living witnesses of his power to save.

Luck and Labor.

Luck sleeps and dreams of fame and treasure;

While Labor gains both health and pleasure!

Luck in sloth is ever winning;

Labor toils without repining.

Luck relies on fortune's favor;

Honest Labor prospers ever.

Luck slides down with all its chances;

Labor upwards still advances.

Luck seeks an empty hand to fill

By wishes, but 'tis empty still;

While well-directed Labor gains

A rich reward for care and pains

—Wait.