

by glances of comprehension and satisfaction.

Lewis listened intently; he leaned forward with his chin resting on the back of the empty chair in front. I momentarily expected some audible comment from him, but it did not come.

At the close of the reading, he straightened up in his chair, thrust his hands into his pockets, and emitted a long, loud sigh as though his breath had been imprisoned for a longer time than usual.

The closing song was announced, and as the people arose, Lewis called out, 'But ain't you goin' to have no Sunday-school lesson, Miss Superintendent?'

'You have just listened to the Sunday-school lesson, Lewis,' I replied.

'Was that the Sunday-school lesson?' he exclaimed. 'Is that the way you do Sunday-school lessons? Why, I never thought Sunday-school was like this! I thought you asked a fellow questions, and, if he didn't answer 'em, he'll feel mean. And I thought you'd ask a fellow if he had a Bible at home, and to come carryin' it next Sunday, and I thought you'd tell him, first thing, that he must be a better boy. Say, do you do like this every Sunday,—about the lesson, I mean? Do you do all that out of your own head?'

The smiles all about him did not disconcert him in the least. He asked these questions looking straight at me with big blue shining eyes, and listened intently while I replied gently:—

'No, Lewis, we do not always have lessons like this. We often ask questions about the lessons. We have the lessons beautifully printed, and the questions are not hard.'

'Is that story all printed out, too?' he interrupted, 'because, if it is, I want it.'

The next Sunday I went to the church early. I really expected to see Lewis there, but was not prepared for what did happen. In a very short time he came leading in his crowd. I smiled at them from across the room, and they came immediately to me.

'Say, Miss Superintendent,' he commenced, 'me and the boys ain't done just right about ball-playing and Sunday-school, and lots of other things, but we'd like to come now, if you'll have us, and we've came early so's to get some of them printed papers to get some answers ready; and, if us boys can do anything for you, just call on us.'

Medicine for Boys.

Let us take the open air,
And the more we take the better,
Let us try to follow nature's laws
To the very letter.

Let us exercise our muscles,
And keep our spirits cheerful,
And then no dread of future ills
Can make us ever fearful.

But violating laws of health
We hold to be a sin,
Then we will never, never drink
Beer, brandy, wine or gin.

And as nicotine is poison
In the blood and on the breath,
And causes many sad complaints
Which often end in death.

Then to those who bid us smoke or chew,
Let us firmly answer No!
And tobacco let us bravely fight
As we fight the direst foe.

Let us eat the plainest food,
And drink the pure, cold water,
And then, I guess, we will be well—
Or, well—Don't you think we oughter?
—S. F. C.

Willie, Dan and the Explosion.

(By M. Carrie Hyde, in 'Presbyterian Banner.')

'Don't cry so, mother,' begged Willie, as they went home after the funeral. 'I'll turn out and earn you a good living up there at the big colliery, and you won't be missing father half as much, with me coming home as black as a dirt bank every night and my can to fill the next morning.'

'You'll not give up your school that your father was so set on, while I have arms to taken in washing, Willie; so no more of that,' she answered, wiping her eyes.

'I shall then,' said Willie, determinedly, looking fondly at his pretty, delicate mother; 'father always 'lowed you wasn't made for no hard work.'

'Yet here I am outliving him, and'—

'Yes, but it was an accident that fetched him; mines is always full of accidents.'

'Yes, indeed, Willie, and that's what I'm saying; I don't want you to go to the mines; and she rubbed her eyes with her knuckles.

Willie saw he had made a mistake; he recovered himself manfully. 'Accidents is everywhere,' he said, 'above ground as well as under. Look at poor Jim McGur, and him only dumping coal on the outside.'

'Ah, Willie! Willie! you do make me that sick with your arguing: I'll leave you try it for a week; but, mind, you must stop whenever I say.'

'All right, mother,' said Willie; 'I'll go speak for a job to the boss now. There he is just coming from work.' And Willie crossed the road and talked a few minutes with a big, burly man, whose face was so thoroughly mine-blackened that his eyeballs showed out like hard-boiled eggs.

'Yes, yes, we'll take you on to-morrow, Willie,' he said. 'We're just running an extra mule car, and you shall have the driving of it, though there's others after it, for I knew your father, Willie, and an honest, stidder man I never wish to see.'

'Thank you; thank you,' said Willie, his white face quite flushed by this stroke of good luck. 'I'll be there to-morrow morning,' and he ran to overtake his mother again.

'I got it, I got it, mother; he's took me on as mule driver right away.'

'Sure, Willie,' she said, smiling faintly down at him. 'You're like your father at picking up a job; it it wasn't for me being ill so much with doctor's bills, we'd have had a tidy sum in the bank forinst a day like this, and you to school, too,' and she began to weep again.

The next morning, at 5.30, Willie, in miner's cap, and can swung over his shoulder, mounted the steep, high mountain side to Big Colliery. The sun was just flushing the sky with its earliest primrose, and the foliage in its autumn glory outdid the gayest chromo. He felt a little of this beauty as he climbed the narrow foot-path, trodden into the side of a coal bank, and when he reached the mouth of the shaft that was to carry him four hundred feet under ground, he found himself unintentionally sympathizing with a little mule, who, kicking with heels and head, refused to go below.

'Ho, there, Dan! Hold on! Look out for his kicking!' And then the men would scatter to the end of the long, leather halter and give the creature's feet plenty of room for their scintillating.

'It's getting late; git him aboard anyhow,' cried one of the men, and suddenly sur-

rounding Dan with a dozen strong arms, they tugged, pulled, pushed the rebellious quadruped into the car, and lowered him to the bottom of the mine.

The next car took down Willie to his first job underground, and he winked and blinked in the darkness several moments before his second sight came to him and he was able to make out surrounding objects. One of the first of these objects that now clearly loomed out of the blackness was Dan, his four feet set like posts to the ground, and refusing firmly to take a step toward the stable.

One of the men raised a heavy braided whip and struck Dan on his shoulders.

'Oh, don't!' said Willie, 'he's just off the nice, green day-lighted pastures and made to come down here in the pitch-dark to work; of course he don't like it.'

'Tain't no worse for him than for the rest,' answered some one, prodding Dan forward with an iron crowbar.

Dan started, and it was then that Willie saw that his side was bleeding from a scrape against the car or the walls of the mine.

'Come on, Willie,' cried one of the men, 'this here's your mule; the order is to give him a bit of a feed, then put him right to work'

'Yes, mister,' said Willie; 'leave me feed him, then, won't you?'

'Oh, you're welcome to feed or drive him or anything,' said the miner, shying off to the end of the halter again as Dan made a new strike with his feet. 'Here, come, take this strap. I've no more time to waste on such as him,' and putting the halter into Willie's hands, he disappeared with the rest of the men down a side gangway.

Willie drew his breath; he was fond of animals in the day-light, but this was different. Dan flung his heels east and west again, and dragged hard at his halter. Many animals were appeased by something to eat. Willie opened his can, and taking out a piece (a thick slice of bread spread with molasses), held it as temptingly near Dan's mouth as it was wise to go.

Dan advanced his strong neck, and blew upon the bread and molasses.

'You see,' continued Willie, 'you and me is brothers. I didn't want to come, either, and I cried all night 'bout leaving my school and coming, but I didn't let on; I kept my heels down and just came ahead, like I was going to a show, so as mother wouldn't worry. Now here we be at your stable. You turn in till I find which is my car; then I'll come git you.'

Dan munched at the piece, but he halted stubbornly again.

'I guess your side hurts,' continued Willie, 'but I'll watch it don't get hurted worsen and you'll never know the looks of a stick if you're quiet and obejeant.'

Dan pricked up his long ears and stepped forward. The young superintendent, who had been unnoticed, heard every word of Willie's talk to the mule, laughed to himself, and passed on.

That noon Willie fed Dan the apple from his can. Gradually Dan became Willie's most willing servant, and the two accomplished their daily work with the constancy of an old pair of miners.

Several months went by, and spring was spreading the valley pasture-land with a tender green cropping, sprinkled with its earliest flowers.

'It was nice up above this morning,'

The juvenile part of the 'Messenger' is continued on page 11.