

Babcock, what if he should refuse to pay for the damages? I should hate to go to law about it."

"He won't refuse; if he does, keep the critters till he will pay. As to law, I guess he's had about enough of that."

"I am sure I thank you for your advice," said Miss Letitia, "and I mean to act upon it to the very letter."

Scarcely was he out of sight when Miss Letitia sent a summons for Mr. Small, which he obeyed as promptly as his neighbour had done.

She made to him precisely the same statement she had made to Mr. Babcock, shewed him the injured property, and asked him to fix the damages. It was remarkable before he did this, that he should ask the same question Mr. Babcock had asked; namely, whether she had any suspicion to whom the animals belonged.

"Well, one of them I observed had a terrible crooked horn."

"Precisely—it's Babcock's heifer; I should know her among a thousand. She was black and white, wasn't she?"

"Well, now I think of it, she was; one seldom sees so clear a black and white on a cow."

"To be sure, they're Babcock's animals fast enough. Well, let me see; what you want is just a fair estimate, I suppose?"

"Certainly."

"Well, I should say ninety dollars was as low as he ought to be allowed to get off with."

"Oh, but I fear that will seem as if I meant to take advantage. Suppose we call it—say seventy-five."

"Just as you please, of course; but hanged if I'd let him off for a cent less than a hundred, if it were my case."

"And if he refuses to pay?"

"Why, keep the animals until he comes around, that's all."

"But there's one thing I neglected to mention—our gate was standing open; that may alter the case."

"Not at all; there's no law against keeping your gate open; there is against stray animals."

"Very well; thank you for your advice," said Miss Letitia; and Mr. Small departed with as smiling a countenance as Mr. Babcock had worn.

But at milking-time that night he made a strange discovery—old brindle was missing! At about the same hour Mr. Babcock made a similar discovery; the black-and-white heifer was nowhere to be found. A horrible suspicion seized them both—a suspicion they would not have made known to each other for the world.

They waited till it was dark, and then Mr. Babcock stole around to Miss Letitia's, and meekly asked leave to look at the animals which had committed the trespass. He would have done it without asking leave, only that thrifty Miss Letitia always shut her barn doors at night.

While he stood looking over into the pens where the cows were confined, and trying to negotiate with Miss Letitia for the release of the heifer, along came Mr. Small in quest of his brindle. The two men stared at each other in blank dismay, then hung their heads in confusion.

It was useless to assert that the damages were too high, for had they not fixed them themselves? It was useless to plead that Miss Letitia was in a manner responsible for what had happened, on account of the open gate, for had they not assured her that circumstance did not alter the case? It was useless to say she had no right to keep the cows in custody, for had they not counselled her to do so? As to going to law about it, would they not become the sport of the whole town?

"He that diggeth a pit, he himself shall fall into it," said Miss Letitia, who read what was passing in their minds as well as if they had spoken, for the light of Isaac's lantern fell full on their faces. "However, on one condition I will free the cows and forgive the debt."

"What is that?" Both thought the question, but did not ask it.

"The condition is that you promise to put a good new fence in place of the old one that separates your estates, dividing the cost between you, and that henceforth you will live together peacefully, so far as in you lies. Do you promise?"

"Yes," muttered both in a voice scarcely audible.

"Shake hands upon it, then," said Miss Letitia.

They did so.

"Now let the cows out, Isaac; it's time they were milked," said she. And the two men went away driving their cows before them, and with a shame-faced air, greatly in contrast with the look of triumph with which they had before quitted her presence.

The fence was built, and the strife ceased when the cause was removed; but it was long before Miss Letitia's part in the affair came to the public ear; for she herself maintained a strict silence concerning it, and she enjoined the same upon her man-servant, Isaac.

#### "MISS HANNAH'S BOY."

It was a cold, dark afternoon, and Miss Hannah Reed drew her shawl more closely around her as she came down the school-house steps. She was a teacher in the public school, and since her father's death, had found urgent need for all that she could earn. Miss Hannah's strength was not great, and her work pressed heavily, so that often when night came she was too tired to read.

The day had been a trying one, and Miss Reed felt unusually weary; the Sunday before she had given up her Sunday-school class, because her week's teaching generally ended in a severe headache. Thinking over this fact, Miss Reed gave an audible sigh, and said half aloud:

"Well, well, there is no use in my trying to do anything

but earn a living; I have time and strength for nothing else."

At this moment she found herself opposite a locksmith's shop, and, remembering that she wanted a key altered, entered the shop. The master was out, but a pale, not very attractive looking boy sat at work, and he said that she could have the key by the next day. As Miss Hannah turned to leave, a weary look in the boy's face caught her eye, and she said in a kindly way:

"Do you like this work, my lad?"

The boy looked up surprised, but seeing a look of interest in her face, said humbly:

"I like it pretty well, ma'am, but I get very tired; I'm not used to be shut up so much."

"What have you been used to do?" said Miss Reed.

"I lived on a farm," said the boy; "but father didn't need us all to help him, so he said I had better come to the city, and I found this place."

"Do you earn enough to live on?"

"I only get about enough to pay my board, and have very little left."

"Where do you board?"

"Not far from here; there are six other fellows that board in the house."

"What do you do in the evening? Do you sit with your lamplady?"

"She don't often sit anywhere, I think, for she's working most of the time, and we don't say much to her, except when we pay our bills. When I can earn a little extra, I go to the minstrels; it's right jolly there?"

"Do you ever go to church?"

"No, ma'am, I don't know much about the churches, and my clothes are not good enough to go."

"Do you ever read?"

"Not much; there are not many books at our house; one fellow takes a newspaper, and he lends me that sometimes."

It was getting late, and Miss Reed, after learning that the boy's name was Joseph Steele, said pleasantly: "Well, Joseph, we have had quite a talk, haven't we?"

When she went home, two voices seemed to be speaking to her; one voice said: "Here is a friendless boy, with no good influences around him, can you not help him a little?"

The other said: "I wouldn't trouble myself about him; you have enough to do." The first voice must have been the strongest, for the next day, when Miss Reed called for the key, she said to Joe:

"Wouldn't you like to go to Sunday-school with me next Sunday?"

Joe looked reflective, and said:

"I don't care much about it, but if you want me to go, I will."

"I would wish you to go once, and see how you like it," said Miss Reed; "and if you call on me at two o'clock next Sunday, we will go together."

When Sunday came, Miss Reed had a headache, and almost hoped that Joe would not appear; but as the clock struck, he came, looking quite clean and neat, and they soon reached the school. The room was a very attractive place, and Joe gazed curiously around. The superintendent shook hands with him very kindly, and then placed him in the class of a very earnest, faithful teacher. After school, Miss Reed found a chance to tell Joe's teacher a few facts about his new scholar, and then she walked some distance with Joe, and was delighted to hear him say that he liked that teacher first-rate, and he meant to come next Sunday.

This was the beginning of new things for Joe. Miss Reed never did anything by halves, and her interest in the boy did not wane. In a few weeks she was rejoiced to discover Joe Steele, dressed in a new coat, sitting in the church gallery. He smiled as he caught her eye, and, after church, he told her that his teacher had helped him to get the coat, and to please him he had come to church. Before long the good teacher invited his whole class to spend the evening with him. Joe told Miss Reed that it was the best evening he had ever spent; he said that they had "nuts and oranges, and the teacher's sister played on the piano, and the boys hardly wanted to go home when the time came."

A good many times Miss Reed purposely passed the little shop so that she might give a kindly nod to Joe as he worked, and it always seemed to Joe that he could work better after she passed by. Another ill-fitting key took Miss Reed again to the shop. And this time she invited Joe to come and see her some evening; and Joe ventured to call, a little scared at first, but greatly pleased. Miss Reed shewed him the pretty things in her parlour, and exerted all her tact to draw him out. She was pleased to hear him speak quite intelligently of his farm life, and shewing him her stereoscope, and treating him to fruit, it was time to go. Joe remarked that he had enjoyed himself wonderfully, and then Miss Reed lent him an interesting book, and after promising to come again, Joe took his departure.

Miss Reed felt very tired when her guest had gone, but to the boy the evening had been worth more than gold. The thought that any one in the great city cared anything about him was a great stimulant to his better nature. The contact with a refined, educated lady had given him a glimpse of a different life from that which he had known. Henceforth, Miss Reed became a synonym for all that was good and wise in the eyes of Joe.

The Reed household began to be interested in Joe, and they fell into the fashion of calling him "Hannah's boy." Even Mrs. Simmons, the old lady in the next house, became interested in him, and when he passed her window, she would nod at him and say, "There comes 'Hannah's boy'; what a deal of pains she would take for that lad; well, well, it may do him good," and then her thoughts would wander

to her own boy far away, and she hoped somebody might care for him.

One day Miss Reed met Joe coming out of a beer-shop, and as she came up, he looked a little confused. "Why, Joe," she said, "do you need to drink beer?" Joe said that he generally got very thirsty by noon, and liked to take one glass, and did not see any harm in that. "I don't know as there is," said Miss Reed; "but, Joe, many who begin by going to a beer-house, end by taking something stronger, and I would be glad if you never went again." Joe looked very grave as she passed on; but he told her afterwards that he was not going any more.

As the time passed on, a gradual change was visible in the locksmith's boy. Joe's coat was neatly brushed; his hair was smooth, and both language and manner changed for the better. Potent influences were at work, and there came a look of intelligence and resolution into his face which it did not seem to see. Some time after this the locksmith had to give up his shop, and Joe was without work; but his Sunday-school teacher succeeded in finding a situation for him in the large house in which he himself was employed, and Miss Reed was delighted at this good fortune, for though she saw Joe much less frequently after this she knew that he was going steadily on, winning the good opinion of his employers. Whenever she met Joe, the pleased look in his face shewed that she was still a dearly valued friend.

Two years have slipped away; and if you had been in Dr. G——'s church last Sunday, you would have seen a pleasant sight. Six young men walked into the church, and took their stand as true servants of God. Among them, with gentlemanly bearing and reverent face, stood "Miss Hannah's boy." Could that young Christian soldier be indeed the same boy? Yes, for in her pew sat Miss Reed, and as she looked at him, sacred joy shone in her face. The good teacher was also there, and as he and Miss Reed shook hands with Joseph Steele after church, there was a light on their faces akin to that which the angels wear when a soul is delivered from sin.

Miss Hannah Reed is still teaching, and is often weary; but in the better country her rest will be sweet, and to her the Master will say: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me." Are there not many in our great cities, who, like Miss Hannah Reed, might help one boy or girl to a better life?

#### LITTLE FIDGET.

Little Bridget was a fidget,  
Little Lucy like a mouse,  
O! so quiet, 'mid the riot  
Of her sister in the house.

Little Fidget troubled Bridget  
In the kitchen making pies.  
"O!" cried Bridget, "Naughty midget,  
Will you over, Miss, be wise?"

Little Bridget, in a fidget,  
Ran to mother to complain.  
Little Lucy had a juicy  
Apple-tart to eat again.

#### RULES FOR HEALTH.

We should not leave our souls to the ministers nor our health to the doctors. So the following simple rules for the preservation of health, especially through the changeable seasons of autumn, winter, and spring, should not be left entirely to health journals. We are right in the midst of the time when they apply:

Never lean with your back against anything that is cold.  
Never begin to journey until breakfast is eaten.  
Never take warm drinks and then immediately go out into the cold air.

Keep the back—especially between the shoulder blades—well covered; also the chest well protected.

In sleeping in a cold room establish a habit of breathing through the nose, and never with the mouth wide open.

Never go to bed with cold or damp feet; always toast them by the fire for ten or fifteen minutes before going to bed.

Never omit regular bathing; for unless the skin is in an active condition, the cold will close the pores and favour congestion and other diseases.

After exercise of any kind never ride in an open carriage nor near the window of a car for a moment. It is dangerous to health and even to life.

When hoarse speak as little as possible until the hoarseness is recovered from, else the voice may be permanently lost, or difficulties of the throat produced.

Merely warm the back by a fire, and never continue keeping the back exposed to the heat after it has become comfortably warm. To do so is debilitating.

When going from a warm atmosphere into a colder one, keep the mouth closed, so that the air may be warmed by its passage through the nose ere it reaches the lungs.

Never stand still in cold weather, especially after having taken a slight degree of exercise; and always avoid standing upon ice or snow, or where the person is exposed to a cold wind.—*Albany Argus.*

The more we do, the more we can do; the more busy we are, the more leisure we have.—*Hazlitt.*

"O! the Eternal fulfil His gracious promise on the instant, where would be the trial of faith, and our confidence in prayer?"—*Grace Aguilar.*