

Our Young Folks.

HER FIRST CHURCH SERVICE.

A bright-eyed little maiden,
With unaccustomed air,
She wondered at the organ,
And nodded during prayer;
She listened to the reading,
And watched the people, too,
For her first Sunday service
Seemed very strange and new.

And when the congregation
Broke forth in sacred song,
She stood upon the footstool
And tried to help along.
She did not know their music,
And so she chose her own—
Of "little robin redbreast"
She sang, in cheery tone.

All utterly unconscious
Of many a smiling gaze,
The childish voice rang clearly
In this odd hymn of praise;
And the gracious pastor waited
Till the ling'ring echoes fled
With a touched and tender spirit,
Ere his loving text he read.

A RIGHT-AWAY BOY.

"Where is Ross, I wonder?" said Mrs. Mayhew. "Have you seen him, Callie?"

"I think I heard him pounding up back of the woodhouse a few minutes ago," replied Callie.

"Well, get yourself ready as soon as you can, Callie, while I call him. You know Uncle Silas is in a great hurry."

Mrs. Mayhew stepped out into the sloping back-yard, and on hearing the pounding above the woodhouse, she called, "Ross! Ross!"

"What do you want, mamma?" Ross answered, without stopping his work.

"Come at once, Ross; don't wait to be called again," said his mother.

"Yes, I'll be there in a minute," he replied; and then, when he heard the door close and knew that his mother had gone back into the house, he muttered to himself a little crossly, "I wonder what she wants me for, anyway. Wants me to brink a bucket o' water, or carry in an armful o' wood, or hoe in the garden, or do something else I don't like to. That's always the way. Well, I'll go pretty soon—as soon as I've finished this bird trap; it's nearly done."

And so, as was his habit, he put off obeying his mother's call until he should finish his own work. Mrs. Mayhew had often been grieved at his habit of delay, and had wondered how she might cure him. She was a kind-hearted mother, and, therefore, very loth to punish the lad unless it became really necessary. He had more than once greatly annoyed her by his failure to come immediately when she called him. It was time, she thought, to teach him an important lesson.

Pound, pound, pound, went the hammer above the woodhouse, waking the echoes in the large barn some distance away; and fully ten minutes had passed, when Mrs. Mayhew's voice again rang in Ross's ear, urging him to come quickly.

"What do you want, mamma?" he responded; and there was a note of impatience in his tones.

"I want you to come right away," she urged. "I'll tell you why as soon as you come."

"Why can't you tell me now?" he scolded.

"Come, come, Ross," she repeated, still more urgently.

"Yes, in a minute"—and pound, pound, pound the hammer echoed in the barn as before. "That proves she wants me to do something I don't like to, or she'd tell me what it is. She's always got some work for me to do—always," he ended, rapping the nails on their heads more vigorously than ever, and muttering to himself.

He soon became so absorbed in his bird trap that it was fully half an hour before he decided to heed his mother's call. Then he flung his hammer to the ground, ran down the path as fast as his feet could carry him to make up for lost time, and dashed into the sitting room like a small cyclone.

"What do you want, mother?" he asked breathlessly.

His mother looked at him reproachfully for a moment, and that made his eyes drop to the floor and a vivid flush leap to his fresh, round cheeks. He wished then that he had obeyed his mother.

"Ross, why didn't you come when I called you?" she asked.

"I—I—wanted to finish my—"

"Yes, that is a very bad habit you have fallen into—you always have something else to do when I want you. Well, Ross, you don't know what you have missed by your disobedience."

"What have I missed, mamma?" he asked, glancing up with a half-frightened look.

"Why, your Uncle Silas Weston was here. You know, you and Callie were going with him on a visit the first time he drove over this way—"

"Where is he, mamma; where is he?" exclaimed Ross, running toward the door.

"He has gone Ross," the lad's mother replied. "He was in a hurry, and could not wait; and as you didn't come when

I called you, he had to take Callie alone, and go away without you."

Ross burst into tears, and then ran down to the gate and looked intently up the road, thinking Uncle Silas might still be in sight, so that he could hail him; but Uncle Silas had been gone at least a quarter of an hour, and with his fleet team must have been two miles away. Then the weeping and angry lad rushed back to the house, and said in a bitter tone, "Why didn't you tell me Uncle Silas was here, mamma?"

"Because I wanted to teach you a lesson that you would never forget," she replied kindly. "I was sorry to disappoint you, Ross; but this punishment will help to teach you to come at once when I call you, whether I have some work for you to do or not."

It was a sore disappointment; for Ross had long counted on a visit to his uncle's; but he could not help admitting that he deserved the punishment he had received. Like most boys, he pouted awhile; but soon his better nature gained the victory, and he resolved to mend his ways.

Since that time his mamma often calls him her little "right-away boy." Can you guess why?

NAT MADE A MISTAKE.

Nat was a venturesome little chap. One day he heard at school that Sam Webb's boat had struck the rocks under the bridge and was breaking to pieces.

Nat wanted to see it, so on his way home he turned off to the railroad bridge which crossed the little river just where it was full of rocks. It was a rough and dangerous place. Creeping along, the little boy bent over until his head grew dizzy, and if he hadn't jumped up quickly he would certainly have fallen over. And something else might have happened too, if he had stayed there two minutes longer, for he had no sooner got off the bridge than a railway train came rushing along that would have crushed him to death in a moment.

But Nat thought he had done a very smart thing, he ran home, and at the dinner-table he boasted that he had been down to the railroad bridge and seen Sam Webb's boat among the rocks, and had just time to get off when the Boston express came along.

Father and mother looked at each other, but not a word was said. Nat thought they would praise him, but they did not.

After dinner father took the little boy into his study. He looked so very sober, Nat began to feel that something dreadful was coming.

Father sat down in his chair, drew the boy up to his side and put his arm around him.

"Nat," said he, "you thought you were very brave to-day, didn't you? But going into danger when there is no need of it is no mark of courage. It is rash and wicked." Then papa stopped, and Nat began to cry, but he never forgot the words of advice that followed:—

"My dear boy, never try how far you can go in a dangerous place; always keep on the safe side."

A HANDSOME SOUL.

One day a boy who was taking his first lesson in the art of sliding down hill, found his feet in too close contact with a lady's silk dress. Mortified and confused, he sprang from his sled, and, cap in hand, commenced an apology.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am; I am very sorry."

"Never mind that," exclaimed the lady, "there is no great harm done, and you feel worse about it than I do."

"But your dress is ruined. I thought you would be angry with me for being so careless."

"Oh, no," she replied, "better to have a soiled dress than a ruffled temper."

"Oh, what a beauty!" exclaimed the lad, as the lady passed on.

"Who's that lady?" returned his comrade. "If you call her a beauty, you sha'n't choose for me. Why, she is old, and her face is wrinkled!"

"I don't care if her face is wrinkled," replied the other, "her soul is handsome, anyhow."

A shout of laughter followed, from which he was glad to escape. Relating the incident to his mother, he said: "Oh, mother, that lady did me good. I shall never forget it; and when I am tempted to get mad, I will think of what she said: 'Better to have a soiled dress than a ruffled temper.'"

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MINARD'S Liniment is the Hair Restorer.

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INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Sept. 25,
1892.

THE LORD'S SUPPER PROFANED.

1 Cor. xi.
20-34

GOLDEN TEXT.—But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.—1 Cor. xi. 28.

INTRODUCTORY.

Through the instrumentality of the Apostle Paul the Gospel had been preached with most encouraging results. A Christian Church had been formed in the city of Corinth, a great commercial centre, people from many lands were to be found there. It was a wicked city, but there as everywhere else where it was received the Gospel exerted a transforming power. They were an impulsive people, and were susceptible to outward influences—the consequence that party spirit and divisions sprang up among them, and great disorders speedily crept in. To correct their errors and bring them to a better state of mind the apostle writes this epistle to them in which he reproves them for their departure from the simplicity of their faith and pure Christian practice. In this chapter he shows how they were perverting one of the most sacred and impressive ordinances of the Church, the Lord's Supper.

I. A Perverted Ordinance.—In the Apostolic Church, as we have seen, the members had things in common. There was a custom then existing called Agape, or the Love Feast. The members of the Church assembled together and partook of a common meal, and at the same time celebrated the Lord's Supper. In the Corinthian Church many of the people brought provision with them, which originally was designed for general distribution. The apostle shows that the manner in which these feasts were conducted rendered the celebration of the Lord's Supper impossible. Instead of their love-feast being an expression of communion with each other, it had become an expression of unchristian selfishness, and had degenerated into carnal excess. Instead of waiting for the general distribution, individuals began to eat what they had brought with them. They were introducing class distinctions where there ought to be none. By this lavish display the poor were shamed. A spirit entirely at variance with the observance of the feast that commemorates Christ's dying love was indulged in. Instead of pure and holy fellowship with Christ, there were exhibitions of gluttony and drunkenness. This painful and disorderly state of things rouses Paul to indignant remonstrance. "What?" he writes, "have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God and shame them that have not [them that are poor]. No wonder that he felt keenly grieved when he learned of the profanation of holy things. It is also intimated to the Corinthians that they had lost the proper conception of the Church of Christ. By departing from the spirit of pure and simple faithful worship, and misapprehension of the true spirit of Christian communion, they had lost the true purpose for which the Church with its Christian ordinances had been instituted. The apostle in his earnest remonstrance indignantly asks: "Despise ye the Church of God?" It is not the building in which they met that the apostle speaks, but the spiritual institution which Christ established in the world, His faithful followers in every age who acknowledge Him as their Lord and Saviour. The degradation of the Church of God by the perversion of its ordinances is a serious offence which brings hurtful consequences to those who occasion or countenance departure from the true spirit of faithful obedience to its King and Head.

II. The Purpose of the Lord's Supper.—Paul states clearly that this sacred ordinance was of direct divine appointment. Christ had Himself, the night He was betrayed, instituted this memorial observance. The manner in which it was to be observed was shown by the Lord's own example. Paul evidently had a direct communication as to the way in which it should be held. "For," says he, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." Their guilt was, therefore, all the greater. He had given them the Lord's own instructions, and these they had perverted and disobeyed. The bread broken was the symbol of the Lord's body broken for the redemption of His people, and partaking of it was to be in remembrance of Him and His atoning sacrifice for sin. The cup likewise was the emblem of His blood shed for the remission of sins. When they drank of that cup it was to be in remembrance of Christ and His death for His people. In observing this ordinance in the manner divinely appointed, Christian communicants show forth Christ's death till He come again. It is thus an abiding memorial of Christ's love in dying for the guilt of men, and a pledge of His coming the second time, without a sin-offering unto salvation. It will be noticed that in this New Testament warrant for the observance of the Lord's Supper, it is not stated how often it should be observed. Churches differ in their practice, though there are no great differences as to their opinions. It has often been regarded as a question of convenience when the ordinance should be celebrated. The apostle insists that when it is observed it should be in a worthy and becoming manner, that its true purpose might be properly carried out.

III. Faith and Self-Examination Necessary to Worthy Communicating.—After stating the purpose for which the Lord's Supper was instituted and the manner in which it is to be observed, the apostle adds a solemn warning against unworthy communicating. Those who do so incur serious guilt. There may be various ways of incurring guilt in connection with the observance of this sacred ordinance, but one particular form of eating of this bread and drinking of this cup unworthily is here spoken of and warned against. It is explained in the twenty-ninth verse, "not discerning the Lord's body." These Corinthians confounded the love feast and the Lord's Supper, and failed to recognize the distinction. What was designed as a feast of faith and love they degraded into a material feast from which the element of spirituality was excluded. The great purpose for which the Lord's Supper was instituted was lost sight of. In the observance they failed to see the Lord's body. Those not discerning the Lord's body are said to be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" and eat and drink judgment to themselves. This, then, is a solemn warning against a faithless and a thoughtless observance of this divinely instituted ordinance. A worthy participation is preceded by self-examination. "Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." By self-examination a man cannot render himself worthy, but the perception of his own unworthiness will help him to rely on the grace of Christ, and direct his thoughts to Him whose love is shown in the death that a faithful observance of the Supper commemorates. Self-examination in the light of God's truth is a difficult, but a very necessary and helpful Christian duty, and it is here enjoined as incumbent on all who would worthily partake of this New Testament ordinance. The faithlessness that led to these disorders in the Corinthian Church was producing its effects among them. There spirituality was well-nigh lost. "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep," God in His mercy was judging them and chastening them, so that they might repent and escape final condemnation.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

The right way of keeping our Lord's ordinances is by following the instructions He has given, and by following the example He has shown.

By want of faith it is possible to pervert the most sacred ordinances and thereby incur guilt.

The Lord's Supper is a precious memorial of His dying love, and a pledge of His second coming.

To old and young the sacred command comes, "This do in remembrance of Me."