

THE PRECIOUS TOKEN.

I have something Jesus gave me
For my own!
It is something which he sent me
From his throne.

I do not seek for hidden gold,
In earth's ground,
Nor give my wealth to gain the pearl
Which I found.

It is something which I carry
Near my heart;
It is safe till Jesus bids me
From it part.

In itself it has no value
More than tears,
Though I'm weary as I bear it,
I've no fears.

It is precious as a token
From my Lord,
That His heart thought is as loving
As His word!

Like His presence, it doth bring me
Peace divine;
'Tis His sweet and tender whisper,
'Thou art mine."

What is the gift I clasp so closely,
Wouldst thou see?
'Tis a cross, which Christ, my Master,
Sent to me.

If my human hand had found it
I should grieve,
But my Jesus laid it on me,
I believe!

Oh, how sweet it is to bear it
As His gift,
While the burden of my treasure
Christ doth lift!

—Congregationalist.

MRS. BOODLE'S CHARITY FAIR.
BY MISS LUCRETIA F. HALE.

"I see no other way. If it is necessary to have a fair, we must have tableaux to raise money for it. And oh, the bother! And what shall we get for it?"

"It is perfectly absurd, and I wonder at your drawing me into it, Rose," exclaimed Agnes; "for you will have to get up some 'reainings' to pay the expenses of the tableaux."

These discouraging remarks were uttered as Rose Ashburn and her friend Agnes were on their way to Mrs. Boodle's for a committee on the proposed Drummondville fair.

"There's nobody to read," continued Agnes, "and nobody to act; and Mrs. Worth has gone and can't lend her dresses, since she must have taken them with her, and then there's nobody to go to readings, tableaux—or—fair!"

"If by everybody," answered Rose, laughing, "you mean Julian, he is to be back next week, and will be fresh for a new enterprise. Then there's the young set of girls to act!"

"I wish you luck with that young set," answered Agnes. "They are never anything but a bother. Each one of them will want to be the prominent character in each picture!"

"Very well," said Rose, undaunted; "we will have a great many pictures, one for each. But the greatest bother of all is coming to this committee. A committee is bad enough, but to hear Mrs. Boodle talk steadily all the afternoon, and to hear Mr. Newsants prose whenever he can get a chance, and in the end we shall do all the work,—this is enough to disgust a saint!"

"Yet you have dragged me into it," said Agnes, as they entered Mrs. Boodle's house.

Mrs. Boodle was talking. She always was; she never stopped. "Mr. Boodle is not much of a talker," she explained, "and the children at table 'are seen and not heard."

"Do come in. Committees are no trouble to me. I can have them at any moment. Dust, of course, you may see in the parlors, though I had the rooms gone over just before you came. But dust there is, dust there will be, and such a spell of dry weather in October! No rain for four weeks, and the watering-carts stopped. Ridiculous, I told Mr. Boodle, when he has been paying for them all summer, and none of us here; and

of course we need them more now than when the house is shut up in summer, and not so much difference if the dust did settle and the furniture all covered. But the neighbors subscribed, and it seemed mean of us not to pay our share, and they do have to meet all the heat and dust staying; and I suppose it is an advantage to have some stay. And indeed, one need not consider Drummondville much of a town; quite a summer place, if it weren't for going off to the seashore in midsummer, and we might as well go straight to Commonwealth Avenue. But Mr. Boodle likes to see after his factories, and October is pleasant in the country, and Bobby is in no hurry to get back to his school. Not but what I have all my furniture covered and the carpets taken up; but there's this new kind of moth!"

Mrs. Boodle did pause at the entrance of Mr. Newsants. "This is unexpected!" she exclaimed. "Our first and only gentleman. And we have had six committees this week!"

Mrs. Boodle was called to the door, and sundry voices took occasion to express themselves. "We must raise funds for the general arrangements!"

"We must have tableaux!"

"Shall we have it at Nunstone Hall?"

"Why not the old school-house?"

"But that horrid stove in the middle of the old school-house!"

"But it is not quite in the middle," ventured another voice.

"We have not decided on the object of the fair."

"I can't see why the widows should be selected," put in another. "The single women often have to earn their own living."

The voices were finally ruled by Mr. Newsants.

"I move that we come to order by nominating Mrs. Boodle as chairman," turning to her as she came back to the room.

"Your office will be to listen to us, and give your opinion when requested."

Without waiting for reply, Mr. Newsants passed into a long speech, laying out the necessity of having the fair, the desirability of deciding upon its object, the methods of raising funds, the decision with regard to the hall, etc., and proposed a number of sub-committees to take charge of these different subjects.

A turmoil of voices, more talk from Mrs. Boodle, a good deal of voting followed, and at a late hour in the afternoon the committee was released. Some of the members lingered to talk it over on the green, opposite Mrs. Boodle's house, Mr. Newsants hurrying away to his office.

"I was so frightened about voting!" said Eunice Port. "I never voted before, and could not understand what they said. I meant to vote for ten cents admission, and it seems I voted for twenty cents."

"And we have not decided upon the object of the fair yet," said Hester Green.

"I held up my left hand instead of my right," continued Eunice Port. "Do you think it made any difference, Agnes? I always do mix up my hands."

"There's no reason why the money should not go to the widows' relief," said Sophy Lane. "There we have a regular organization formed."

"I don't know why the money should go to the widows," interrupted Hester. "They decided to marry, I suppose, to have a man to provide for them. He is bound to make provision for them."

"But if he is dead!" exclaimed Sophy. "Think of Mrs. Liveout, with her five children!"

"And think of the two Spike sisters," said Hester, "who have an old mother and a crippled brother to support!"

"But if we call it women's relief," said Sophy, "it takes in too many. We must draw a line somewhere."

"Ought I to go back to Mrs. Boodle's," again persisted Eunice. "To explain about my vote? I said 'aye' when I meant 'no,' and I raised my left hand."

"If the vote had been about the object, it might have been important," answered Sophy. "But we had no vote on the object."

"It will all come up again in our several committees," said Agnes. "Nothing is decided."

"That is another trouble," said Eunice Port. "I was put on the ticket committee. Now, what am I to do about tickets?"

"Oh, Mr. Newsants is chairman of that committee. He will order them printed. He may call upon you to keep the accounts."

"That would be worse!" exclaimed Eunice. "I never could add up."

"The fun will be in the tableaux," said Rose. "I am on that committee, and I shall want all you young girls to help. We can have them without expense in the old school-house."

"With the stove in the middle of the room!" exclaimed Sophy.

"It is a little one side," said Eunice. "Not exactly in the middle."

The meeting dispersed, Eunice Port explaining to Agnes why it was she was always making a mistake about her right hand.

"You see I burned my left hand when I was quite a child; at least, I think it was my left hand. But I was taught to remember that it was not my right. Now, you know, it is our right hand we have to remember, and I have to think it is not the left hand, if it was the left hand I burned. But the scar is gone now, so I can't tell which. I remember just how it was. I was flinging some chestnuts into the fire, a little awkward, with my left hand."

Agnes had reached the corner of the street, and had to say good-by, before hearing the rest of the story.

Mrs. Boodle gave the first reading at her house. Prof. Wisper, from one of the colleges, had been invited to read; the price of tickets was put as low as ten cents, and the two parlors were filled. Indeed many of the young people were obliged to sit on the stairs.

There was a disappointment with regard to Prof. Wisper, as he was suffering with a severe hoarseness, and his voice was scarcely audible. He began with Macaulay's "Ivy," reading it with great spirit; but it could not be heard outside of the back parlor, where he was placed. Indeed, those on the stairs did not know when he began, and were still talking when he finished the first verse.

Something must be done. Mrs. Boodle came to the rescue. She placed herself at the door leading from the front parlor into the entry, at the foot of the stairs, and read herself the passages selected by Prof. Wisper.

She read somewhat rapidly, in order to catch up with the professor, and those on the border line were a little confused when Prof. Wisper was making his comments on "King Francis and the glove," and Mrs. Boodle had not finished "The Battle of Ivy." But those on the stairs and at the back of the front parlor had the full advantage of Mrs. Boodle's sonorous voice.

A murmur of voices rose, as the reading was concluded, and chairs were moved, and the guests gladly changed their position.

"How fortunate you were, so near Prof. Wisper."

"How unfortunate that he has no voice!"

"How kind of Mrs. Boodle!"

"How kind of the professor under the circumstances!"

"And those who were on the stairs could not hear the professor at all!"

"And those in the back parlor did not know that Mrs. Boodle was reading!"

"What a pity she had to read so fast!"

"So good of her to read at all! Such beautiful passages!"

"Such interesting comments!"

"If we only could have heard them!"

"A great success for the fair. There must be as many as seventy here, and at ten cents apiece."

"You mean for the tableaux. This pays the expenses of the tableaux. More than seventy here. I dare say we have taken over ten dollars. Did you see those people at the windows looking in? So rude! And so mean not to pay ten cents!"

"But then there would have been no room if they had come in, and they would not have heard if there had been room."

"O Agnes! was I right?" appealed Eunice. "I was introduced to Prof. Wisper, and I couldn't think of anything to say but 'How do you do?'"

"And what did he answer?" asked Agnes.

"Oh, by that time he had no voice," said Eunice; "and of course he was not well, and I need not have asked, and I had no idea what to say next."

"What did you say?" asked Agnes.

"There was such a crowd I was pushed away. Perhaps I ought to have said something more!"

"Not if you were pushed away," said Agnes, consolingly.

"But everybody else shook hands," said Eunice. "Perhaps I ought to have shaken hands instead of asking him how he did, seeing as I knew. I had such a good place; I sat where I could hear Prof. Wisper when I leaned forward and Mrs. Boodle when I leaned back. I hope he didn't think it odd, my leaning back and forward so!"

Indeed, everybody shook hands with Prof. Wisper, and everybody said it was a great success.

Mrs. Greene did go to sleep on the back sofa of the front parlor, and some of the young people did take on the upper stair. But then Mrs. Green always went to sleep on such occasions and when did not young people talk on an upper stair?

And the tableaux went off well at the old school-house—all the young girls had prominent parts, and all the young men assisted.

The fair was held in the old school-house too. The decorations for the tableaux answered for the fair. An alcove was built about the stove, covered with evergreen. The fair opened at 4, P. M., and lasted till 9, 30.

All Drummondville was there. The school-children came in the afternoon, and some of the elderly ladies, and the tide reached a full flood in the evening.

Mrs. Boodle stood by the entrance-door to welcome all who came.

"What a success! Just what I said to Mr. Boodle. There's the refreshment-table across the hall, beyond the stove, and the table for fancy articles on one side and the grab-bag the other. And Miss Agnes and Miss Rose are telling fortunes in the alcove with Mr. Julian and Mr. Ernest."

Miss Agnes is a sibyl one side of the stove and Miss Rose, some kind of a prophetess, the other. You may all ask where all the things came from. I did send all the things I brought at the selling-off of the fair at Custer, and the sewing-circle contributed, and there were some afghans from our last fair.

"And so good of Mr. Green! he sent in some rubber toys from his shop. That I call liberal, when he might have considered ours a rival concern."

"Everybody was kind. Even Mrs. Liveout and the Miss Spikes' sent holders. Of course you'll get your supper here."

"Everybody does, it adds to the treasury, you know, and such a good supper."

"Mrs. Tracy sends coffee—there's Mrs. Feners, she's had supper twice; and I don't know but she's taking a third, for the sake of the cause, and the supper so good!"

Mr. Newsants, at the other end of the hall, was explaining that the success was owing to the organization: "Nothing like organization. We divided into sub-committees, and gave everybody something to do."

Eunice Port accented Agnes with some anxiety.

"Had I better stand behind the table or in front? It is so hard about making change. I get bothered!"

"Why not stand in front?" suggested Agnes, "we need somebody to point out where the things are!"

"But I can't see the tags very well," said Eunice, "to tell them about the prices, and I get pushed about so?"

"You might help hand the cups of coffee for Mrs. Green, at the refreshment-table."

"So I might," said Eunice, "if she will tell me where to hand them."

At last everything was sold that could be sold. The last afghan was raffled for, all but one that had been through many fairs, and could be given to the Spikes; while some of the remaining rubber toys, too much bruised to be returned to Mr. Green, could be sent to the Liveout children.

"Everybody gone but the committee," said Mr. Newsants, "and no supper left! I supposed we should sit down to the rest of the refreshments and talk it over."

"I'll go out for some ice at the restaurant!" exclaimed one of the tableaux young men.

"And the treasurer can be looking over our receipts," said Mrs. Boodle, "and let us know after supper how much was for the cause."

A table was cleared, and all were ready for the ice when it appeared.

Meanwhile the treasurer had been sitting at a desk in the corner, with a puzzled air. With the same disturbed expression he seated himself at the supper-table.

It was not till they had finished with their ice that he was called upon for his report.

Indeed, claiming brought pletely at the million Liveout and ban her sw last tim looked i since Cl "Yo dren," i of them "I w Mrs. Bo sure I d "Let Mr. Nev "Oug first!" "Do Newsan The t wiped h if there can't qu a hesita but ther No re handed "I ce said Mr. "But treasure way," exclaim last. " there w "No, hundred about to on each room, c than a l "The least, fi after a l fraud s Every "The said Mr I am su "I br said Eu teacher. "But said He all expe "An tableaux: "Th ings," e "I g Boodle. "It treasure \$6, but Mrs. paid for Then P a readi to one But his and sev twenty-mondv low for as Mrs. house. "Lib exclaim to assist "The from th "Let Mr. Ne "Rec \$13. "Ov Hester, hundre "I i treasur ures, i \$11 73. "But there, b Boodle. "Bu not pai "Let sants, in the a Esth Sophy.