

The Home Mission Journal

A record of Missionary, Sunday-school and Temperance work, and a repository of church and non-church activities, and general religious literature. Published semi-monthly.

All communications, whether containing money or other wise are to be addressed to:

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Terms - - - 50 Cents a Year

Rosecroft.

CHAPTER XVII.

But where was Aunt Diantha? Elsie and Rosie had prevailed upon her to take a cup of the steaming hot beef tea, which the faithful servant had brought up for her "dear little ladies," and to lie down upon a second lounge, amid soft cushions and pillows. Then Elsie had drifted off into the sleep that gradually became profound and dreamless, and from which she did not awaken till just now.

She raised her head and looked about her. Aunt Diantha was no longer upon the lounge, but, dressed in a tea gown of the delicate lavender shade she loved, was lying back in a reclining chair near the window. Her little Bible lay open upon her lap; evidently she had been reading in the blessed book and after a time had drifted off again into the sleep she so much needed. She looked very pale, yet the half smile upon her sweet mouth showed that her slumbers were restful. Tears rose in Elsie's eyes as she gazed at her.

"She looks like a sleeping angel, but how white and worn! The shock of that sudden walking was not much for her. Strange that the ruffian did not rouse her, climbing through her window, but God was watching over her, dear little Aunt Diantha! So tragic as she is, the very sight of his horrid face might have prostrated her, even if he had done her no other harm. It was danger enough, giving her that chloroform! And what shall we do nights now?"—the sudden thought coming into her head that she had been too tired and dazed to reflect upon before.

As if made conscious in some subtle way that Elsie was awake, Aunt Diantha opened her eyes just then and looked toward her niece.

"You are awake, darling! I hope you feel refreshed. You were sleeping like a baby when I got up at eight o'clock."

"Oh yes, I've had a beautiful sleep, and feel quite like myself again, only a little languid and lazy. But Aunt dear, I'm afraid you haven't rested as you ought."

"Oh yes, I had two hours' sleep at least on the lounge, and have been taking naps in this chair from time to time since I got up. But what are you reflecting upon so deeply?" for Elsie was absorbed in thought again.

"I was thinking, Aunt, what we should do nights now; it really seems as if we needed a man round to protect us. I was wondering what you would think of asking Rosie's cousin, Andrew Beaton, to come here and keep guard nights. You know he's a very decent man, strong and brave, too, and there's that little room off the kitchen—"

"That might have been a good arrangement, my child," as Elsie paused, "if we had seen the necessity for it earlier. But Rosie told me the other day that Andrew had found a situation as gardener in Sheriton, and was to take the place immediately. But I have another plan in my head, one Dr. Noble proposed to me a week ago."

"And what plan is that, Aunt?"

"Why, as you know already, our church has offered Mr. Adams, the young minister who was here helping Dr. Noble last winter, the position of pastor's assistant, and he has accepted. I am so glad, for really our good pastor has been over-taken with work, and especially since we started that little mission in Cherry Valley, four miles away. We've all been anxious about him, as you know, for though there are so many willing workers in the church, there is not one who can relieve and help him like a regular pastor's assistant. Mr. Adams will preach at the mission

every Sunday, and take charge of the weekly evening meeting there besides. When he will help Dr. Noble in making calls, visiting the sick, and his right hand in short, assisting him in more ways than we can think of. He is such a noble young Christian, full of enthusiasm, yet so deferential in his ways to our pastor and other elderly members of the church. Dr. Noble knew his family well, and says his parents, they have both passed away during the last few years, were such splendid Christian people, that it was through their training, as well as his own disposition, that Norman Adams grew up to be such a thorough gentleman. Yet there's nothing offensive about him; he's as manly and robust as he is refined, and he won the hearts of the roughest Irish boys in Cherry Valley last winter. Squire Remington says he would be responsible for his whole salary, if necessary, rather than have our pastor fail to secure such an assistant. But it won't be necessary, for as you know, Elsie, the rest of us are just as anxious as the good Squire that our faithful pastor should not be broken down through overwork. And now for Dr. Noble's proposition to me."

She paused and looked wistfully at Elsie, as if anxious for the effect of her communication upon the young girl.

"Dear little Aunt, why do you look so anxiously at me? Anything you want seems right to me, always. Does Dr. Noble wish Mr. Adams to come to us?"

In spite of the brave face she put on, Elsie felt considerably dismayed at the thought of a stranger coming into their home life. But she struggled against the feeling, and Miss Hathaway, relieved that her niece anticipated the proposition and seemed so cheerful over it, went on more confidently:

"Yes, that's just what Dr. Noble proposed, that he should have a room with or without board in our house. He has always felt anxious because we have had no man on the premises, and what happened this morning will, I'm sure, make him urge Mr. Adams' coming to us, as he did not before."

"You did not like the idea, Aunt?"

"Well, I confess, I shrank from the idea of a stranger, and one of the masculine persuasion, coming into our quiet home life. But I have that large, spare room, and the little alcove opening off the parlor, which he could use for a study, and altogether I suppose we could hardly do a more sensible thing than to take Mr. Adams as a boarder. If we look on the practical side of the arrangement, the seven dollars a week he would pay us would be quite an item for people of our limited means, but I am thinking more of other things. What a blessing you, coming has been to me, my treasure, and now to have this bright, noble young man in the house, may I mean added joy and comfort!"

"What a blessing to him, Aunt, you ought to say. Such a joy and comfort as it's been to me to live with you and Rosie in this little 'cottage paradisaic,' I hope Mr. Adams will appreciate his blessings and understand how fortunate he is to be mothered by my Aunt Diantha! What do you suppose Rosie will say to the arrangement?"

"Oh, I just mentioned the subject to her this morning, and rather to my surprise, she was delighted! She begged me to take him as a boarder, 'the poor, dear lad, with no mother to care for him,' and thinks it will do us all good to have such a beautiful young Christian minister in the house. She went on to say how she would manage with the work, so that I need have scarcely a bit of extra care on his account. That can hardly be possible, of course, though fortunately I'm not one of the worrying sort. So Rosie favors the arrangement decidedly, you see, and now it's my Elsie feels the same way—"

She had come to her side as she spoke, and now she leant down to kiss her. The young girl threw her arms around Miss Hathaway's neck as she replied:

"Dearest Aunt, as I said before, I want whatever you do, and really begin to feel quite happy at the thought of Mr. Adams' coming. You must let me help you in any extra work it makes. And now do send word to Dr. Noble as quickly as possible, for fear somebody else should secure our boarder."

"I will speak to Dr. Noble when he calls this afternoon. He was so distressed when he heard of our adventure last night, and sent word that

he was coming to make us a pastoral visit."

"Dear, kind old man!" said Elsie.

"Mr. Adams expects to come to Berwick Saturday. Meantime, our young friend, Mr. Carew, is coming to spend the week with us, as I told you already. He will take his dinner in New York, as usual, but we'll give him as nice a breakfast and supper every day as even his capable landlady could prepare. You see, pussy, with a smile, "we are likely to be provided with masculine protection for some time to come."

(To be Continued.)

Liquor leaks.

"Liquor leaks, did you say? What are they? The bits I send for my drinks, I suppose. But you need not think they will ever sink this ship," an Charlie Carolin walked across the shop with an air. "Is that all?" and he spat out in front of his shop mate.

"How much did your last drink cost you, Charley?"

"Ten cents," replied Charley, deliberately.

"Did you get the right change?"

Charley took a handful of change out of his pocket. "I so nearly did that he had got a dollar changed, and he looks a rather blank when he saw that thirty-five cents were missing."

"How did you know? Did you steal it?"

"They do say that you drinkink fellows seldom get the right change from your honest (?) bartenders; but that is not the worst leak."

"What is it?" defiantly.

"The time you spend in drinking, in being booze, and in getting over it."

"I was only half an hour late this morning, and that time wasn't all taken up in drinking."

"You are always here promptly at other times," said Sammy blandly, "and your half hour is worth more than ten cents."

"Yes, I shall get docked fifty on it," I suppose; but what is that compared with Jim Ryan across the street there? He's been in that saloon all the morning, and his team standing there doing nothing."

"Yes, and his farm at home is needing him. Probably his farm runs behind as much from this loss of time as from all the money he pays for his drinks."

"Oh, yes, and more," said Charley. "The fact is, his farm is mortgaged, and he'll soon lose it. If I had a farm—"

"You have a trade, Charley, which is better than his farm."

"How much did you get docked for time off last week?"

"Six dollars."

"And the drinks cost six more."

"How did you know?" said Charley, hotly.

"I didn't know only that it is the general rule. The time the drinker wastes on account of the drink averages as much as it cost. At first it is less, at last it is more; until the poor fellow gets so he does not work at all. You haven't got quite half way yet, —only two days out of six, not counting the naps."

"Oh, for pity's sake! Well, I'll stop right away. I can't afford to lose time like that. And the cool way you talk it makes a man's face stare him in the face. I never heard that rule before about the time spent averaging as much as the drinks. That makes a damn loss right along. I'll quit!"

Meekness is a conquering grace. It is the *raisonnement* of the drummer, the successful politician, and even the book agent, for force and self-assertion no longer carry their old-time power. The farmer who is quiet and gentle and firm of hand will train the steers and break the colts of the farm, better than his neighbor who swaggers and swears with a loud voice and heavy blows. The child yields to confidence and love in the discipline of the home life, while those methods of repression and fear, which still linger, like winter snows, among so many homes, fail to win the love of the heart or the obedience of the will. For children are as hungry for kindness as they are for cookies and buns, and only by such gentle and just ways of parental care can they be won to habits of purity and trust.