

said Mrs. Damon, with a curious accent of envy.

'She Christ woman!' said Hilda, simply.

'What do you mean by that?'

'Christ woman—you know? Be in Christ church—help along—do Christ way all the time—in eferydings.'

'Oh, a Christian! A good many women are Christians, but they don't all seem like what you make her out. I don't know any women that think about their neighbors and the butcher and the baker and the candlestick-maker the way you set her out. I don't know what you can mean by it!'

'Mrs. Damon's tone was excited and almost fretful. Many new thoughts were worrying her.

'Oh, but she was different!' beamed Hilda.

Something in the word smote Mrs. Damon to the heart. That was what Virginia Jane was fretting for—something 'different!'

'Hilda! Hilda!'

'Go see what those children want, will you? And once you get 'em between the sheets, if you ever do, come back to me. I've got some things I want to—see about.'

Hilda did not know, but it hurt Mrs. Damon worse than a sprained ankle to say that much. Strange things were happening, indeed. A capable New England housewife and mother consulting with her 'help'—and German or Dutch or some other outlandish thing at that—about how to bring up her children and manage her family! It was worse than a sprained ankle. But Mrs. Damon was too good a New England Spartan to shrink at a pain—even a pride-pain. When Hilda came back, she had a question all ready for her:

'What did you mean by saying your Mrs. Dixon was "different"? Different from what?'

'Vrom dose ladies you speak apout,' said Hilda, promptly. 'I not know any dose kind. Mees Deexon real 'Merican kind—true Christ woman!' said Hilda, generalizing from her one specimen known and loved in her one year out of the Fatherland. 'I tink all 'Merican women like dat—not so? Make eferi day holiday for somepody? Lofe church abofe all ting? Fill oop dere house oop with seek and poor beeples dat no more can efer pay dem back again? Dat the Christ way, Mees Deexon say. She like all time something going on!'

'That what Virginia Jane is always harping on!' muttered Mrs. Damon. 'She says we're so dull here.'

'She haf a guest room,' went on Hilda, in a tone of loving remembrance. 'It was always ready for Christ's folks—that what she calls them—you know what I mean! His bruders and his sisters, or maybe mutter und fader. So house never empty—never dull. Always somepody coming and going. This day missionary—some oder time little cripple child, then some girl want place to stay awhile. One time she know missionary woman, going off ofer sea, no nice dress to wear, seek, too, and tired, no mooch money. She say, "Come here to my house. I be mutter to you. I make you nice dress to wear." So she come, and stay whole week—two week. Mees Deexon make her many, many dress,' said Hilda, twinkling her ten fingers earnestly in her usual gesture, 'many oder ting, trunkful, with lofe-ly stitches! Send her 'way so happy!'

'I am a Christian woman, Hilda!' said Mrs. Damon, bent on confession. She didn't say 'a Christ woman'; somehow that seemed like claiming more than she dared claim in face of Hilda's artless portrait.

'Yaas,' said Hilda, calmly. 'I been sure you 'Merican lady.'

'Not that kind. I never have had any guest room—like that you tell about.'

'So? I lofe to help you feex one!'

'I never had any missionaries to my house, nor Woman's Auxiliaries, and they've asked me more times than you could shake a stick at, nor any Junior Mission Circles that Maud Ella could belong to—seemed to me I couldn't bear to have 'em littering up the front room with all their patches and barrel-packin'—and the cradle roll folks never got me on their roll, though they've come round reg'lar for the last ten years every time I had anybody in a cradle, and—well, there! you better go right back to your Mrs. Dixon just as fast

as you can, for there's no use pretending I'm her style of a Christian, nor yourn, either. I might jest as well out with it and be done with it. I'll let ye go right off, the minute I can set foot on the floor. You'd only be disappointed in me, and I can't stand it.'

Hilda stood still in the middle of the floor, with her plump hands clasped in front of her, and her round, beaming face softening into a look of sorrowful perplexity.

'My Mrs. Deexon, she dead!'

'Oh!' said Mrs. Damon, sharply.

'The meenister say, "Her Master was not villing she should be so far from Him any longer." So now I come to lif with you. I be sure you make meestake. I know you Christ woman, only you seek and tired and trouble! I be sure you true Christ woman!'

Hilda's tone was pleading. Her eyes were bright and anxious. Looking up into them, a sudden resolve came into Mrs. Damon's heart, and she spoke out with her usual decision.

'Hilda, I am! I guess I kind o' ben mistaken right along. You jest wait till I get up and round a spell! I'll tell that Woman's Auxiliary they can meet to my house any time they take a notion, if it's every other time runnin'. And I'll take my turn entertaining the delegates. I'll set you to fixing up that guest room to-morrow. There's two other rooms good enough for comp'ny. This is to be—His room!'

A wonderful, soft, happy feeling stole into her heart with those last two softly-spoken words. Mrs. Damon herself did not understand it, but the joy of it shone in her face. As for Hilda, her face gave back joy for joy; as if it had been a great moon-faced reflector.

'Goot!' she cried. 'I vill hurry oop and get through all my work, and I s'aal be hands to you while you plan and vork inside your head, and I vork outside!'

'Now you may call Jinny,' said Mrs. Damon, sinking back on her couch, from which she had half risen in her excitement.

'What is it, mother?' asked Jinny, dully, entering the room at Hilda's summons. 'Does it ache more than it did 'fore supper?'

'Nothin' aches!' said Mrs. Damon, unconscious, in her mood of exultation, of any untruthfulness. 'I wanted to say to you, Virginia Jane, that I've changed my mind about some things, and if you want a Junior s'ciety, you can have one, and have the first meetin' meet here for all I care, and—'

'Mother Damon!' cried Jinny, in a shrill little scream of delight.

'And,' pursued her mother, in her old, masterful tone, which, despite all change of base, would always be hers to the end of the chapter, 'as fur as havin' the Busy Bees pack their Christmas barrel in the settin' room, I'm willin', and you may put on your hat and get Dick to go with you over to the minister's house and tell him so. I said I wouldn't, but I will.'

'O mother!' breathed Jinny, joyfully. The Minister's wife just felt awfully when you said "No" to her that day. I know she'll just about hug you now. We've got such a beautiful place for such things—and you're such a beautiful mother!'

The last words were whispered, with a double kiss at the end of them, as Jinny stooped over the couch an instant before she ran to get Dick and her hat and jacket.

'I do believe things are going to be different!' she said, as Dick waited for her while she buttoned up her jacket. 'Seems as if mother never cared about giving anything to the church, or having any church things over here or anything. And now she acts just 's if she'd like to give everything she'd got and herself into the bargain. 'Tis kind o' giving herself to let folks come tramping into her clean house—mother's the nicest housekeeper in town, that I know, and everybody says so. And now she's going to be the nicest—mother! Isn't it just beautiful? We'll have a jolly Christmas! If it's more blessed to give than to receive, mother'll git it fifty times over, for there isn't ever any half-way about mother. If she gives at all, she gives

all over. O Dick, I do believe from this night on things are going to begin to be different!'

The children were talking on the front doorstep, just outside of mother's window. Every word came in to her hungry ears like music.

'I'm going to begin to be different!' she whispered, prayerfully. 'Just fix that pillow under my foot there, will you, Hilda? There, that'll do for to-night. Go get some good sleep, and to-morrow I'll send you up garret to the big cedar chest by the window. There's a heap o' things might just as well go into that Christmas barrel when they're packin' it, and do some good in the world. Some of 'em are good enough for the Queen o' Sheby, if she was cold an' it was winter weather.'

'Chreestmas? Do you begin so soon for Chreestmas? Dat vas anoder birthday! I must tell the shildren! Dat iss the whole world's birthday for eferi one to celebrate!' said Hilda, tucking the hurt foot un tenderly. 'Now I be sure you Christ woman! I haf certain sign. My Mees Deexon, she say Christ woman that vay always—glad to be all time giving.'

### Think it Over.

If a record could be given of all the trouble which comes to us in a life, I think it would be found that one-half has arisen from what was only anticipated, but never actually realised. If you and I were to spend a little time in reviewing our past lives, I am sure we would see that the things about which we fretted most, and which, more than aught else, damped our spirits, and took the sunshine out of our existence, were things which never occurred. And, on the other hand, we would see that the things which brought us most joy were those about which we had worried least of all, and came unexpectedly.

Strange to say that, while in regard to most other things we learn by experience, and personally cease doing what we see to be worse than useless, this is not the case in regard to fretting. For, notwithstanding all that experience has taught us of the utter folly of the habit, we continually repeat that folly from time to time.

Look you a little at your own experience and see whether or not this is true.

### Helpful Hints.

One of the most potent aids in relieving a nervous headache is a generous bowl of hot soup, or, better yet, broth containing hot milk, such as oyster stew or clam bouillon. This hot, stimulating liquid draws the blood from the brain, as well as giving nourishment and strength to throw off the derangement. Hot drinks, simple food and mustard foot baths are infinitely preferable to drugs and more efficacious in the long run.

A professional picture hanger says the way to make nails and screws hold firmly in the plaster of a wall is to enlarge the hole made by the screw, moisten the edge of the plaster thoroughly with water, then fill the space with plaster of Paris, pressing the screw into the soft plaster. The latter hardens around the screw or nail and keeps it in place. But the only really secure method is to screw into a lath or something solid behind the plaster.

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