

## THE MESSENGER.

playing, and certainly they would not have time for anything of that kind this winter, would they?

On Sunday what did that astonishing young woman do but walk three miles to church and Sunday-school, and three miles back, alone, through snow ankle deep. It was a topic of conversation for a week in the hamlet, but the next Sunday morning the committeeman, at whose house she boarded, did an unheard of thing. He harnessed up his team, and carried his wife and children and the teacher to meeting, and a more complacent family you would have to go far to find.

The Sunday after several families followed the example, and that night there was a meeting in the school house. The first religious meeting that had been held in Phoenixville since the fire. The room was so uncomfortably full that the owner of the hall said they might as well meet there, if they wanted any more meetings, so one was appointed for Thursday evening regular, and the minister came over from 'town.' After that no one even thought of saying dance.

'I haint never seen nobody jest like her,' said the proprietor of the 'pool room.' 'Ain't prim, don't preach, won't touch cider, nor beer, nor wine, dance, nor play cards, nor talk about folks; she won't even sing comic songs; she haint no use fur none er them things. When Valentine's day comes, let's jest give her a shower bath of valentines—comic ones—the worst we can find—jest to let her know that everybody don't think she's perfect. It'll be quite er show ter see what she'll do. Now, 'twill, sure.'

'Let's set some child to ask her about valentines, jest to see what she will say.'

Accordingly, next morning the valentine talk was started, as the children stood about the glowing stove in the little, schoolroom waiting for the nine o'clock bell to ring. The teacher at her desk arranging exercises did not speak until she was asked a question; then she said: 'Yes, I can draw and write, but I never had time to make a valentine, and I never sent one in my life. There is no harm in sending a pretty valentine as a token of love, respect or friendship, but I fancy the sending of comic valentines has always an inner motive of malice, and that the one who receives them is always more or less hurt. Now, as a school, let us send Scripture texts and invitations to our meetings instead of valentines. Let us send comforting texts to Mr. Sleight, whose little boy has just died. An encouraging text to Tommy Lee, who has broken his leg; a warning to any one who we fear is not doing right. We will all keep our own secrets, and the pennies saved by leaving the gaudy caricatures in the storekeeper's show windows we can put in the missionary collection if we like, for you know our next meeting is to be a mission meeting. Some of you have said you didn't know about missions, so we will try to learn more. We will have a programme made out in which every pupil here shall have a part, and we will see what a good time we can have. You can all invite every one you wish to be present.' If you have ever lived in a country community you can imagine how quickly mission talk superseded talk of valentines, with the result that the meeting was a crowded one. The programme had been carefully arranged, and parents were interested to hear their own children reading and reciting of people in our own land who are without Bibles or Gospel privileges, and in seeing them point out the places upon the missionary maps with which this wonderful teacher had come provided.

At length voluntary remarks were asked, and Uncle Artemus Washburne said: 'For some years now, since the meetin' house burned down, I don't see how we're been so much better off than the folks we've been hearin' about. We've had Bibles, but haven't read them. We've broken Sunday until there want nothin' sacred left about it fur us, and we wa'n't over particular about swear words. We've forgot all about the forgivin' spirit, an' I don't 'spose there was one of us who didn't dread Valentine's day, because we knew that every mean or silly thing we'd done fur a year would come back to us in a valentine. The children have told us what was said at the school house tuther mornin' about such things, an' I want to be the fust one ter offer the money I've saved that way this year ter go to missions.'

Going forward, he placed a little envelope on the desk in front of Miss Mayfield, and so many others followed in an orderly procession that she was nearly snowed under with the little white packets.

For a minute or two she could not find her voice to speak, as opening one missive after another she found, besides the small sum of money, expressions of kindness, thanks for what she was doing in their little community, wishes for a Sunday-school, and for a minister to come and preach to them, and much more. Along the same line that made her feel as if she had become immediately a mother confessor, 'I have heard of your fondness for valentines here,' she said, presently, 'and ever since I came have dreaded the day, wondering how I could meet your expressions at that time. This shows how much better the Lord can order things than we had even dared to hope. Now, I will endeavor to show myself worthy of the confidence placed in me, and to carry out all your wishes for a better state of things for you and for your children.'

'There always has to be a leader,' said the owner of the hall. 'I've been thinkin' about it. I've led these people down hill. Now, Miss Mayfield has come, and is leadin' them up, and as I don't want to be ploddin' on alone, I'll turn around and foller along, and I won't only try to keep up, but I will look out for stragglers, and hurry up the ones laggin' behind, and as for Valentine's day, this is the fust one I've spent fur a long spell when I haint been mad at everybody and when everybody haint been mad at me. We'll leave valentines at the foot of the hill.' And everybody said Amen!

### Sunday-School Training.

What then ought to be done in our seminaries to prepare the men for such work? In the very first place, such work ought to be made 'prominent.' It will not do to have lectures on church history and biblical or systematic theology, put in the front rank, and practical Sunday-school work relegated to a back seat, and put aside with a few lectures, delivered at such odd times as are left. To do this is to stamp the thought of inferiority and unimportance on this kind of work, and the student will be quick to answer to such suggestion. If a hundred and twenty lectures are delivered to prepare the student for his sermonic work, and only half a dozen on the Sunday-school work, is it to be wondered at that the young graduate comes out thinking the Sunday-school part of his work of small value compared with his sermonic efforts? Now it being a fact that the average pastor must look more to his Sunday-school for new church-members than to the outside world, should it not

be his effort so to manage that branch of his work as to secure there the best spiritual results? Not that the pastor need himself be the superintendent, but that he should be able to fit the right man to do the work, and prepare the teachers to teach in such manner as to secure the largest spiritual results. This, however, will never come to pass as it should, until our theological seminaries so change the 'emphasis' of their lecture course as to put stress on this side of the work of the future minister. Then, and only then, shall we have a vast army of men fitted to fit others for this grand work of lifting the Sunday-school work to the highest plane that it can occupy.—Dr. Schauffler.

### The Unrecognized Christ.

(From 'Christian Guardian'.)

'If I had dwelt,'—so mused a tender woman,  
All fine emotions stirred  
Through pondering o'er that Mfe, Divine yet  
human,

Told in the Sacred Word,—  
'If I had dwelt of old, a Jewish maiden,  
In some Judean street  
Where Jesus walked, and heard His word, so  
laden

With comfort strangely sweet:  
And seen the face where utmost pity blended  
With each rebuke of wrong;  
I would have left my lattice, and descended,  
And followed with the throng.

'If I had been the daughter, jewel-girdled,  
Of some rich Rabbi there,  
Seeing the sick, blind, halt—my blood had  
curdled

At sight of such despair;  
And I had wrenched the sapphires from my  
fillet,

Nor let one spark remain;  
Snatched up my gold, amid the crowd to  
spill it  
For pity of their pain.

'I would have let the palsied fingers hold me,  
I would have walked between  
The Marys and Salome, while they told me  
About the Magdalene.

'Foxes have holes'—I think my heart had  
broken.

To hear the words so said,—  
'While Christ had not'—Were sadder ever  
spoken?—

'A place to lay His head!'  
I would have flung abroad my doors before  
Him.

And in my joy have been  
First on the threshold, eager to adore Him,  
And crave His entrance in!

—Ah! would you so? Without a recognition  
You passed Him yesterday  
Jostled aside, unhelped, His meek petition,  
And calmly went your way.  
With warmth and comfort, garmented and  
girdled,

Before your window-sill  
Saw crowds sweep by; and if your blood is  
curdled,

You wear the jewels still.  
You catch aside your robes, lest want should  
clutch them,

In its imploring wild;  
Or lest some woeful penitent might touch  
them

And you be thus defiled.  
O dreamers, dreaming that your faith is  
keeping

All service free from blot,  
Christ daily walks your streets, sick, suffer-  
ing, weeping,

And ye perceive Him not!—

The song service in the Sunday-school should always be spirited. By this we do not mean that it should be a 'hop-skip' affair, the children being urged to sing faster and louder. Let the singing be tender and reverential and devout. Better sing one song with the spirit and understanding than a half dozen with unthinking volume of sound. In this the teacher must set the example. Sometimes a word of explanation before the song is sung will add much to its effectiveness. Impress the value of songs. 'Come before his presence with singing.'