

# HOW SUNDAY SCHOOL RECRUITS WERE GAINED.

**L**AURA had reached the gate, when she hesitated.

"I believe I'll try for those boys once more. It will not do any good, I suppose, but at least it won't do any harm; and then they will be off my conscience, at any rate."

So she skirted round by the side of the house, and presently appeared before her two brothers and her two cousins as they lay stretched out under the trees in various full-length attitudes.

"Come on with me to Sunday school," said Laura. "It will be a nice variety for you, and do you good."

"No, thank you, sis," said Clarence; "the trouble with me is that I'm too good already, if you will excuse my modesty."

"There are some people," remarked Chris., scathingly, "in whom any amount of modesty can be excused."

"You'll come, Chris. won't you?" "Why, you see the trouble with me is that I'm not good enough. I'd go in a minute if I was. Perhaps Jim would like it, only he seems to be asleep."

Jim snored aloud.

"Yes, you hear that. Queer. He must have gone off quite suddenly; he was as wide awake as anybody half a second ago. He'll be so disappointed when he finds out what he has missed; but you needn't try to rouse him, he's such an awfully heavy sleeper. I guess Tom would go, though."

"I happen to know Tom wouldn't," said that youth energetically; "he doesn't care as much as he might for stuffy little schoolrooms and hard board benches. The ground does well enough for him on a day like this."

"Don't be late on our account, sis," said Clarence.

And Laura took the hint.

"I told you so," said Chris, when she had turned the corner of the house; "I knew she would be after us. She hasn't passed a Sunday since Tom and I came. She's a persistent little Christian, believes in home missions, and lives up to it."

"Foreign ones, too, said Clarence, with some brotherly pride. "Just lately she pruned off quite a lot of the fancy trimmings that girls love, and sent the proceeds to China or somewhere else. She thought she was being as deep about it as mid ocean, but I suspected what she was at; and when I fixed the guilt on her, she couldn't deny it."

There was a pause, during which Jim, who had waked up, chewed a blade of grass to its extreme end; then, before beginning on another, blurted out abruptly,—

"I say—"

The boys looked at him.

"Well, what?" said Clarence.

"Nothing."

"I say so too," said Chris. "Why shouldn't we? I haven't a doubt but what we'd live through it, and she has lived through plenty to oblige us. It seems to me it ought to be about time for her to have a turn now."

"What are you talking about, any way?" said Tom.

"Ask Jim; he knows."

"Why, I was just thinking," said Jim apologetically, "that it might not be so bad to go to Sunday school for once, since Laura has her heart so set on it. It wouldn't really be much to do, I suppose, and she would think it was the nicest present we could make her."

"I believe it's a fact," said Chris. "She'd rather have it than all the crown jewels of Great Britain in a lump, paid right down into her hand."

"It would be an uncommon bore," grumbled Clarence; "but then—"

"Yes, exactly. We've been running into debt like anything, and we ought to think about settling the bill if we can. It would have been pretty slim for us in lots of ways this summer if it hadn't been for Laura; we all know that. If it wasn't for her, for instance, where would we be in the matter of cakes and chocolate caramels, and stitches in cake, and general coziness and prosperity?"

"But it is almost too late to go to-day, isn't it?" said Tom. "Next week will do, won't it?"

"No; come ahead," Chris insisted. "We can make it to-day if we'll only stir a little. And good resolutions are not the safest things to last over; we'd better strike while the iron is hot."

"Hot!" remonstrated Clarence; "I think luke-warm is the most that can be said." Then, with a brilliant thought coming to him, "So it wouldn't be worth while to strike now, would it? We'll go."

He went hastily, owing to the symptoms of aggression on the part of the other boys, who had long had warrants out against "Clarence's puns."

By dint of exertion they managed to reach the church before the opening exercises were over. As the quartette filed in, rather smiling and shame faced, Laura was not the only person in the room who was transfixed with astonishment. They behaved with great decorum during the whole service, and withdrew promptly when it was concluded, so that Laura had no chance to speak to them until she was at home again.

"So you really did come, she said. "What made you do it, you delightful boys?"

"We thought you had invited us," said Tom in an injured tone.