

dumb waiter from the cellar would be a very good thing. But this is my plan. You know that when Dottie was a baby mother slept in the little room off the kitchen so as to be downstairs with the children.'

'Yes, but that room is too small to hold Dottie's crib and the boys' bed. When the little folks grew bigger she had to move upstairs.'

'I know. But this is the idea that came to me. The long woodshed is at the back of that little room. It would be possible to partition off another bedroom from the end of the woodshed for the boys, open a door into it from mother's room, and she would have her little folks under her eye and on the ground floor. She would not have to go upstairs at all, for I would keep that part of the house in order.'

'It might be a good thing,' said the father, thoughtfully, 'but I fear it would cost too much.'

'It would not be necessary to plaster,' urged Esther. 'The room could be made quite warm with building paper or felt, some of those substitutes that are used now-a-days. Perhaps if you had a carpenter for a day you could do the rest yourself, and there would not be much material to buy.'

After talking the matter over and getting an estimate of expense Mr. Selden was won to Esther's plan, and going energetically to work soon had a nice little room for the two boys. The comfort the mother took in having all her work on the one floor only a woman could understand. And best of all was the fact that loving thoughts had planned it for her and the love of her own folks done the work. Thinking and doing for each other was drawing the members of the family closer together every day.

'How different it seems to have Esther home,' said the father, confidentially, one night. 'Do you know she seems to take as much interest in the farm as if she were a boy?'

'A son of her age would be a great help to you about the work, father,' said the wife.

'Yes, indeed,' assented Mr. Selden. 'But Esther really has a good idea of agriculture. And I am going to the Farmers' Institute this fall and want you and her to go, too. I guess I have been getting into a rut and I mean to get out. Some new ideas won't hurt me. Esther and I have been talking things over; she has subscribed for two papers, and sent for a lot of bulletins from the Department of Agriculture at Washington. I'm beginning to think brains will count as much as strength in farming, and Esther has the brains. She and I have formed a partnership and the firm means to do great things next year. Tell you we are getting the good of Esther and her education this year, aren't we? Lucky thing for us she did not go to the city to teach.'

'And for the school at North Porter, too,' chimed in the mother. 'Every one says it is the best school they ever had in the village. The big boys and girls are getting so interested. Esther is a first-rate teacher, I guess. I know she helps the boys at home and they are doing better than they ever did before. She puts her heart into the work. It beats all how fast the time goes while she is home.'

'That is what I say, too,' said Esther, coming in as the last words were said. 'Time has fairly flown since I left school. I've been busy and happy every minute.'

'You have been busy doing for others,' said her mother, fondly. 'You are a good girl, Esther. I feared you would find life here too dull for you, but you do not seem to, and you have made life worth more to the rest of us.'

'That is sweet to hear,' said Esther, with shining eyes.

'You did not use to be so thoughtful of us all,' said her mother. 'What has come over you lately, Esther?'

The girl only laughed and kissed them both, but when her mother pressed for an answer she said, gravely:

'I concluded that it was time I should make some return for all I have been receiving all my life; that to be a true child of God I must give, not simply take. There is something worth thinking about that I learned from one of my favorite poems:

'Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive
A spark disturbs our clod,
Nearer we hold of God

Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.'

So Mr. Moore's sermon found an application.

The Crossways.

Sibyl, her pretty, girlish face angry and mutinous, dashed from the room, slamming the door behind her. In the silence that followed, her last words still seemed to echo.

'It isn't fair—just because you're the oldest and have always had things, that we should never have anything. It's our turn. How would you have liked it when you were eighteen? You've had your good times. It's just downright selfish of you not to let us have ours, and I'm going to say it out for once, so now!'

Virginia drew a long breath. It had been 'said out' unquestionably. Going to the door, she turned the key. It had been coming for a long time—some such crisis as this; now that it had come, she was going to face it without flinching. She seated herself before her dressing table, and looked steadily in the glass. Yes, it was true—she was not so pretty as she had been; the first girlish bloom was gone—gone to Sibyl and Evelyn.

'Point one,' she said, slowly. 'Virginia Crane, you are jealous of your little sisters.'

Point two. Sibyl is right. You've had your good times, and it is their turn.

'Point three. Something must be done at once. What shall it be?'

There was a long silence after the third point. Virginia was thinking. There were several things she might do. She could go abroad with the Clarendons. She thought that over a while, and then put it aside. 'I won't shirk!' she declared. She could take up settlement work, for instance. That, too, she rejected.

'It wouldn't,' she said, with grim humor, 'be fair to the poor. They have enough to bear without having to help out the poor rich.'

There remained one way, a very distasteful one, but she could do it—at least, she could give it a trial. She would study the art of being an old sister. It would not be easy for her to step aside gracefully, not half so easy as for some girls, but she could try; she could study it as she had studied over her music. For an hour she sat there, thinking it out. Then she opened her door.

'Sibyl!' she called.

Sibyl, half-ashamed and half-defiant, came hesitatingly.

'I've changed my mind about the concert, Virginia said. 'You are right—it is your turn. I'll stay and entertain Aunt Gracia. And would you like to wear my string of pearls to your party?'

Sibyl stared in bewilderment, the color flooding her face. 'Oh, Virginia,' she gasped, 'do you mean it? I—' impetuously she threw her arms about her sister's neck—'I was such a horrid pig!' she cried.

And suddenly to Virginia there came a strange thought. Suppose in the 'good times' she were missing the joy of being a sister!—'Southern Cross.'

The Boy That Lives on our Farm

The boy lives on our farm, he's not

Afraid o' horses none!

An' he can make 'em lope, er trot,

Er rack, er pace, er run.

Sometimes he drives two horses, when

He comes to town an' brings

A waggonful o' taters nen,

An' roastin' ears an' things.

Two horses is 'a team,' he says—

An' when you drive er hitch,

The right-un's a 'near horse,' I guess,

Er 'off'—I don't know which.

The boy lives on our farm, he told

Me, too, 'at he can see,

By lookin' at their teeth, how old

A horse is, to a T!

I'd be the gladdest boy alive

Er I knowed much as that,

An' could stand up like him an' drive

An' jist push back my hat,

Like he comes skallyhootin' through

Our alley, ye-one arm

A-wavin' fare-we-well! to you—

The boy lives on our farm!

—Farming World.'

An Indian Holy Man.

(The Rev. R. R. Johnson, B.A., Gogha, in 'Daybreak'.)

When I was a boy I often heard missionaries speak of the strange means to which the people of India resort in order to get rid of their sins. They told us men would sometimes fast for long periods, others would stand on one leg for a long time, others sleep on spiked beds, whilst others take a vow never to speak again.

Once, in a big religious fair, I saw a devotee hanging by his feet from a tree, but with that exception I had never come across any of these ascetics till a few days ago. Then I saw a man who has taken a vow of silence. He lives in a small hut made of grass and mud not far from Hatbab where we are at present encamped. His hut is close to the sea-shore. I suppose there are two reasons why he built it there. One is, that near by is a famous idol which he worships, an idol over which the sea washes at every tide; and the other, that beside the hut there is a step-well with very good water in it. Round the well he has planted red oleanders and other flowering shrubs, and in time he will have a pretty little garden where there was once only sand and coarse grass.

Such a queer looking old chap as he is! He has very long hair and long straggly beard, a short leg, stiff at the knee so that he cannot straighten it, wears the minimum of clothing, sleeps on a bed whose 'mattress' is a big, flat stone with a deer skin over it, and never leaves the immediate precincts of his hut, unless it is to worship the idol, or to chase away wicked fishermen, who, he thinks, are going to commit sin by catching fish, and thus taking life.

I had heard of his vow, and went down to try to draw him into a conversation. It was a very peculiar and rather one-sided conversation, but I got most of his history by questions which he answered by signs. He belongs to a village about five miles away, and is an ascetic's son. Like most Indian 'holy men' he was none too good in his youth, so a year ago he took a vow not to speak for twenty-five years, thus making sure he would not sin with his tongue. Then, to ensure a comfortable living, he came and settled in his present place near several flourishing villages, whose inhabitants, he knew, would see he lacked nothing they could supply. From conversations with some of the villagers I find that people go every day to see him, taking with them food of every kind, and, judging by the man's figure, he does not go in for much self-denial in the eating line. I asked some of his followers why they fed a lazy man like him. They replied it was to gain merit. They seemed to think a special kind of sanctity belonged to a man who was under such a vow, and they could see no harm in him making himself insensible by smoking bhang.* 'It helps him to concentrate his thoughts on God,' they said.

They told me of another form of austerity he practices. In May, when the sun is so hot that in the middle of the day all field work stops, and even the hardest headed farm laborers seek shelter from its burning rays in the shade of a tree or under a roof, this ascetic lights four fires within about five feet of each other, and then sits down in the middle, and sits till he is nearly roasted alive, and all the while the sun's scorching rays are pouring down on his bare head. This is another way in which, according to the Hindus, the stains of sin can be removed.

It is to tell people, with such peculiar ideas, God's way of salvation through Jesus Christ that your missionaries preach and teach, work and pray. May all our readers be ready to help in this great work in whatever way God opens up for them.

* Indian hemp, the smoking of which acts on the mind like opium, first exciting and then stupefying.

The wisest man could ask no more of fate
Than to be simple, modest, manly, true,
Safe from the many, honored by the few;
Nothing to crave in Church or World or State,
But inwardly in secret to be great.

—Lowell.