

The missionary spirit which she had proposed to plead in extenuation of her extravagance showed itself now as quite too ridiculous to be mentioned.

The polite clerk read over dates and items to them, a long, long list, and Sallie confusedly felt as though "candy," "nuts," and "oranges" comprised almost the whole.

"Do you think that is correct, Sallie?" her father asked, when the end had been reached and the startling sum total read.

"I presume it is," replied Sallie meekly, "but I had no idea it amounted to so much."

A lump in her throat cut off all explanation or apology that she might have made, if indeed she could have thought of any excuse for herself.

"I am confident there are no mistakes," said the clerk, "for I was always particular to put down everything at the time it was bought, and I have added it twice to avoid errors. Of course, I supposed that Miss Harper was also keeping the account."

"Add it up yourself, Sallie," said her father, pushing the book towards her; and with tear-dimmed eyes and crimson cheeks Sallie went over the fatal figures, only to find the addition correct. Her father took out his wallet and looked over the contents a little, then went and conferred with Mr. Streeter a few minutes at the other end of the store.

"I'll pay you six dollars and eighty-nine cents now," he said coming back, "and give my note for five to Streeter & Sampson. You please write the note due in three months, and I'll sign it."

Sallie was only too sure she had not enough money to pay the whole. She gladly decided she might be spared, and hastened to hide herself and her humiliation in her room. Her father soon came over, and they set out for home.

It was not at all like the exhilarating home-coming Sallie had been wont to picture to herself in the fore part of the term. Spite of the May sunshine, the spring freshness of everything and the bubbling music of the bobolinks, the day seemed dreary. Her father was so quiet and unsocial, so unlike his usual cordial, cheery self, that there seemed no pleasure for her in anything.

"O father," Sallie burst out at length, when they had ridden for a long time in the dreariest kind of silence, "do scold me as I deserve, and don't seem so grieved. I was a wicked, thoughtless girl, and I don't deserve forgiveness."

"It did hurt me, Sallie, more than I like to acknowledge; but I do not believe you will ever do the like again."

"Never, never!" sobbed Sallie. "If I did, I should hate myself worse than I do now, if that were possible. O father, I will work and repay you that money somehow, this very summer, see, if I don't."

That night after Sallie had gone up stairs, she heard her mother say,

"O Ephraim, where's your new coat?"

"I concluded not to buy one," was the reply.

"Now that's too bad," her mother energetically answered. "You don't get over to Groton only once in a great while, and have a chance to buy. Your old coat is getting so shabby I'm downright ashamed of you."

"Well, it'll have to do me a spell longer. I hadn't the money to spare after Sallie's school bills were paid, and I thought I'd wait till we turned something from the farm."

Not a word from her kind father about that dreadful store-bill, which would more than have bought him a new coat. And much to Sallie's relief, no mention of it was ever made at home. Her mother would not have had the leniency that her father had, and Sallie felt as if her overtaxed nerves could not endure the lecture her mother would feel it her duty to give her. In her heart of hearts she blessed her father for his judicious silence. More firmly than ever she determined to make herself worthy of his kindness and forbearance.

Sallie went right into the work immediately, "like all possessed," as her mother phrased it.

"Seems as if she can't do enough to help us," she told Mrs. Prime, the neighbor across the road. "When there a'n't anything to do in the house, she's out helping her father; fairly seems to delight to be working with him. I expected like as not she'd come home full of high notions, and want no end of fine clothes for summer, but she vows she won't have a new thing.

She's been and rigged over her old dresses and hats, and is saving beyond anything I ever knew her before. And don't you think, she's been and took a school to keep, over in the Bean district. Sister Vira is coming to stay two or three months with us, and she always helps me more or less, so Sallie's bound to be earning something while she can be spared at home."

Sallie duly went to her school in the Bean neighborhood, and taught the three months with great credit to herself—albeit it was considered a hard school, and the young Beans especially seemed bound, as beans always do, to come up wrong end first. There was real work in teaching that school, care and anxiety and actual labor, very different from going to school at Groton Academy, boarding with Mrs. Slater, and having those jolly Saturday evenings spreads. But the discipline made a woman of Sallie, and never was there a happier girl than she when she brought home her hard-earned money, and put it in her father's hand.

"Oh, no! keep it, Sallie, you'll need it to spend for yourself, and you've worked hard to earn it," said Mr. Harper.

"I earned it for you," persisted Sallie, half crying, "and you and I will go to Groton next week, and you shall buy you a new suit of clothes!"

And Sallie carried the day.—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

### AUNT SUE'S STORY.

BY CELIA SANFORD.

"What can be the harm, I should really like to know, of my going down street for an hour or two in the evening? Mother is so particular. She can not bear me out of her sight a minute," and the speaker, a fair-haired boy of ten or twelve years, with an aggrieved look upon his usually bright face, tore into fragments a strip of paper which he held in his hand and scattered the bits upon the carpet.

"Mother loves you too well, Arthur, dear," replied his sister, "to allow you upon the streets in the evening, and you can see for yourself that the company you meet there would be harmful for a young boy like you. There is Dick Allen, for instance. You can not help knowing that he uses vulgar and profane language, and I saw him puffing a cigar upon the street this very day."

"Who asked you to speak? I should like to know. I guess I can play with boys if they are rude, without becoming like them. I am not obliged to copy their faults."

"I don't know about that, Arthur; you remember your motto for to-day, 'A man is known by the company he keeps,' and I suppose the same is true of boys. And the Bible says, 'Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?'"

"Well, you need not preach. If I want to hear a sermon I can go to church."

"And besides, Arthur," continued his sister, "you remember mother promised papa on his dying bed that she would watch faithfully over his children, and especially you, Arthur. I do not see how you can cross her wishes; and she is so gentle and loving, too. It hurts her more than it does you when she is obliged to give you pain, but she must be mindful of your best interests, and—"

"Now, see here, Carrie, if you say another word I'll leave the room," and the boy put on an injured look, marched across the room, seated himself by the window, and looked sullenly out into the deepening twilight. He was in a most uncomfortable frame of mind, and the longer he nursed his wrath the more uncomfortable he became; and when aunt Sue and his two little sisters, Stella and Eva, came into the room, he did not deign to notice the one, and rudely repelled the others.

It was the hour for their accustomed game of romps with Arthur, and they were astonished at his moodiness, so unlike his usual merry, frolicsome ways, and tried playfully to draw him out, but at some cut-rebuff of his, Eva's lips quivered, and both little girls retreated to their aunt's side, and soon forgot their troubles in listening to her cheerful words.

"O, aunt Sue, tell us a story; do, please, before Mamma lights the lamp," pleaded Eva.

"Yes, do," chimed in Stella's sweet voice, "and let it be a true story about some little boy or girl that you have known. I like true stories best."

Aunt Sue thought a moment and then leaning back in her easy-chair, she suffered Stella to remove the knitting from her hands and began softly: "Yes, dearies, I will tell you a true story of a dear little boy whom I knew many years ago. He was sweet-tempered, and good, and beautiful. His blue eyes were full of laughter, and the golden curls clustered thickly around his white, broad forehead. He was the pride and joy of his mother's heart, and she loved him very tenderly; and he was all she had left to love, for his little brothers and sisters had, one by one, left her to live with the angels, and, at last, his papa, too, was carried to the churchyard, and laid to rest beside four little grass-grown mounds, besprinkled with violets and mountain daisies; and then little Georgie was all that was left to her; and it seemed as if every fibre of her heart was entwined about him and her very life was interwoven with the life of the child, and her constant cry was: 'Lord, spare me this, my only treasure, for I can not live without him!'"

"But time flies, and Georgie is twelve years old, a noble, manly, promising boy. The mother would fain have kept him a child dependent on her love and care, she would have laid down her life to shield him from temptation; but Georgie loved company, and the kind of company which was at hand, and in which, for want of better, he was indulged, soon made the quiet atmosphere of home irksome to him; and his mother thought that it was her love for him that prompted the indulgence of all his wishes, and could not deny him; but it was her weakness and want of firmness.

"Instead of saying with decision, 'Georgie, my child, you can not go out to-night. I do not like the company you meet with at the village, and I can not allow you to go there,' she would say, 'O Georgie, you can not think how much your going out of evenings so worries me. I do wish you would stay at home more,' and Georgie would answer: 'Oh, mother, you are so fidgety! What harm can possibly come to me? I should like to know. You don't want to keep me cooped up here at home till I lost all life and spirits, now do you?' and then he would kiss her gayly and promising to be back in an hour or two would go whistling down the street. And very soon his will overpowered his mother's in everything; and he kept later and later hours, and grew every year more and more unsteady."

"He loved his mother, but he had never been taught strict obedience to her wishes, or self-control; and the tempter stood before him in alluring form, holding out bewitching, dazzling charms, and before he was seventeen years old his mother had reason to fear that he had formed many disorderly habits. His evenings were spent in low company; he had learned to smoke and chew, and many a form of impiety, at which he would once have shuddered, had become familiar to his lips; and once or twice—O children, can I say it?—his breath smelled of rum. Yes, actually smelled of rum."

"His mother was alarmed, and in bitterness of soul, such as she had never known in all her bereavement, she pleaded with him and prayed him to turn from his evil associates. He would listen at first, and pitying her grief, would promise amendment and for awhile would refrain from going out; but just as soon as hope would begin to revive in her heart, he would yield again to temptation, and dive deeper into the haunts of vice and degradation."

"The poor mother fainted, and lay long in a state of unconsciousness the first time her boy was brought home to her drunk. After that he seemed to throw off all restraint, and his downward course was very rapid; and the burning tears and loving entreaties of his mother were of no avail. His feet were taken in a snare, and ruin and destruction came down upon him like an avalanche."

"At last there came an hour, the saddest in the poor mother's history, when her boy was brought home to her, a lifeless, mangled corpse. In a state of semi-consciousness caused by drink, he had attempted to step from one railway car to another, while in motion, and missing his footing he had fallen, and been crushed to death in an instant. For weeks the mother's life trembled in the balance between life and death, and when at last she was restored she learned that her son's irregularities had swallowed up her

pleasant home, and she was penniless as well as childless.

"And so the sad history of this bright, beautiful boy, with its bitter ending, all came of disregard to his mother's wishes, of trifling with temptation, and yielding to evil companionship. No, not all; the mother, too, must bear her part of the blame; perhaps a larger part belongs to her, because she weakly yielded to her son's importunities, and indulged him in things which she knew if persisted in would end in ruin."

A deep silence of some moments followed the recital of "Aunt Sue's Story," broken only by an occasional sob from the little girls and the soft purring of Eva's favorite kitten, which she held tightly clasped in her hands. The mother had come in at the beginning of the story, and now sat with tear-filled eyes and averted face, thinking of her own responsibilities, and resolving to meet them faithfully at any cost. Aunt Sue's eyes were dry, but her face was very sad and white as she drew from the folds of her bombazine dress a miniature, set in gold, as a rosy-cheeked, golden-haired child, and gazed long and tenderly upon it, and then she broke out; "Oh Georgie! Georgie! would God I had died for thee! my sweet, my beautiful boy!"

The children pressed up eagerly to look at the picture, and Stella exclaimed; "O auntie, it looks just like you!" And then the children understood that they had indeed listened to a life story, the truth of which had whitened the locks and wrinkled the face of the dear auntie who had come to them three years before, and whom they had all learned to love so dearly.

Arthur slipped from his seat by the window, and came and stood beside his mother, drawing his arm around her neck, and laying his wet cheek against hers; and then the sobs burst forth, and he spoke almost in a whisper: "Mother, I am glad you did not let me go out. I shall never want to disobey you again, never."—Morning Star.

### A BIG WEST INDIAN SPIDER.

This insect is as large as the palm of a man's hand. Its size makes a monster of it; but its colors being varied and beautiful makes one willing to look at it. It has ten legs, and four joints, and claws at the end. Its mouth is covered with hairs of a greyish hue, and some red ones. It has a crooked tooth on each side of polished black. When it is old, it becomes covered with down looking like brown or black velvet. Its net is large and strong, and extends from tree to tree, being strong enough to ensnare a bird as large as a thrush.

### Question Corner.—No. 18.

#### BIBLE QUESTIONS.

##### SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

My 1, 2, 7, 3, 8, 4 give the name of a woman, who having been healed by the Saviour, ministered unto Him of her substance.

My 2, 4, 5, 6, is what the Lord swore unto Abram that He would perform.

My 3, 2, 7, 6. One who escaped a general calamity through faith.

My 7, 3, 7, 5, 6, 2, 5, 6. The place to which king Solomon banished a priest after thrusting "him from being priest unto the Lord."

My 5, 2, 2, 5, 6 gives that which, when broken; Solomon compared to confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble.

My 6 and 2 give the first word that Boaz addressed to one of his kinsmen as he passed by.

My 4, 8, 5. A small insect by whom Solomon advises idlers to be instructed.

My 3, 7, 5, 6, 4, 8; The name of one who severely rebuked David.

My whole is the name of a king's son who died with his father in battle.

#### ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN No. 16

1. From Kirjath-jearim. 1 Chron. 13. 6.
2. It was taken there from Bethshemesh after the Philistines had returned it to that place. 1 Sam. 6. 20, 21.
3. Malchus a servant of the high priest; he was healed by Christ. John 18. 10. Luke 22. 50, 51.
4. By Christ in the sermon on the mount. Matt. 5. 48.

SCRIPTURE PROVERB.—Boast not thyself of to-morrow.—Prov. xxvii. 1.