



THE best help is not to bear the troubles of others for them, but to inspire them with courage and energy to bear their burdens themselves and meet the difficulties of life bravely.—Lubbock.

The Second Chance

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(Continued from last week)

Pearl, the oldest daughter of John Watson, a C.P.R. section man living in Milford, Mass., received a large sum of money from the relatives of a young Englishman she had nursed when ill. She decides to educate herself and the rest of the family. The Watsons are joined by their Aunt Kate, who proves not an unkind friend. The Watsons are joined by their Aunt Kate, who proves not an unkind friend. The Watsons are joined by their Aunt Kate, who proves not an unkind friend.

HE then turned to Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Motherwell. "It's a bare-looking school, isn't it?" she said amiably. "You women ought to try to fix it up and make it look like a school." Mrs. Burrell prided herself on her plain speaking.

At this Mrs. Steadman, who was a large, pompous woman, became so indignant that the cerise roses on her hat fairly shook. "I guess it doesn't keep the children from learning," she said hotly; "and that's mostly what a school is for."

"Oh, you are quite wrong, Mrs. Steadman," Mrs. Burrell replied, wondering just how it had happened that she had given Mrs. Steadman cause for offence. "Perhaps you think it doesn't prevent the children from learning, but it does. There's plenty of other things for children to learn besides what is in the books. Maybe they didn't learn that when they were young, but it would have been better if they had. Children should have a bed of flowers, and a little garden and trees to play under."

"Well, you can have them for yours," Mrs. Steadman said harshly, narrowing her eyes down to glittering slits. She knew that Mrs. Burrell had no children living; but when Mrs. Steadman's anger rose she tried to say the bitterest thing she could think of.

Mrs. Burrell was silent for a moment or two. Then she said gently: "My little girl has them, Mrs. Steadman. She has flowers that never fade, and she needs no shade from trees, for no heat shall fall upon them there. I wasn't thinking of my own. I was thinking of yours and the other children who come here."

"Well, I guess we've done more for the school than anybody else in the town," Mrs. Steadman said loftily. "We pay taxes on nineteen hundred acres of land, and only send two children."

Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Motherwell joined the conversation then, and endeavoured to smooth down Mrs. Steadman's ruffled plume. "She ain't going to dictate to us," Mrs. Steadman declared vehemently.

came into his own. "I am going to try," he said simply. Mrs. Burrell took hold of Bud's hand and said earnestly: "God only knows what can be made of a young man who is willing to try."

Bud's eyes were shining with emotion as he returned the handclasp. And thus the good seed was sown in the fertile soil of Bud Perkins's heart, destined to be cruelly choked by weeds in the evil days to come, but never quite forgotten by the Master Sower!

On the way home Bud was strangely silent, and Martha, with quick intuition, divined the cause. A great wave of emotion was surging through the boy's heart, a great new love for everyone and everything; he wanted to do something, to suffer, to engrain, every ripple that ran over the meadowlark, the rustle of the leaves above them as they drove through the poplar grove on the school acre, to give him the voice of God calling him to loving service.

"Martha," he said suddenly, "I haven't been very good to you, have I, old girl? Lots of times I could have been nicer and helped you more. I want to be better to you now. I never thought of it before, but I know that I've often let you do things that I might have done myself. I am going to be kinder and better, I hope."

Martha was not ready of speech. "You're all right, Bud," she said. "I know how you feel, and I'm glad."

CHAPTER XVI

SPIRITUAL ADVISORS

When Bud and Martha reached home, Bud went straight to his father, who was sitting in his stockinged feet, yawning over a machinery catalogue to "Dad," he said, "I'm going to be a better boy than I've been."

"How's that, Buddie?" Mr. Perkins asked suspiciously. Bud coloured uncomfortably. "I've made up my mind to be a Christian, father," he answered, after a pause.

"All right, Bud, that's all right," the old man answered, letting the catalogue fall to the floor. "A little religion is a fine thing, and no one should be without it. I'm a religious man myself, Buddie, if anyone should ask you. I can always ask a blessing at the table when there's company—you know that yourself—and I've attended church for years; I

never miss going the Sunday the Fortegers get preached to. I favour the Church of England myself, though your ma's folks always patronized the Methodists, I like the Church of England best because they can give you such a dandy funeral, no matter who you are, you or George! and no questions asked. They sure can give you a large great send-off. This little fellow is a Methodist, isn't he?"

"Yes, he's a Methodist," said Bud. "Well, now, Bud, I don't want to discourage you, but you have to be careful how you get mixed up with them Methodists; they go too far and are apt to overdo things. You mind when there was them big revival meetings at Milford a few years ago. Well, sir, Brown, the drummer, got religion and burned up all his pipes and tobacco; they tell me they were as fine a stock of briar-roots and amber mouthpieces as any person would care to see; people who raked would care to see it me it was a terrible sight altogether—and he was a smart man up to that time, makin' good money sellin' rain-water for medicine."

Now, Buddie, as you go chippin' in your nickle when the plate passes, and it's all right to buy stuff at their sales. I mind when they got that queer ladies raffled off Church of England ladies raffled off, and they bought two ten-cent throws, and never kicked when I didn't get it. I says: 'Oh, well, it's gone for a good cause.' But don't let them get too strong a hold on you."

"But, father," Bud said earnestly. "I want to stand up for everything that's right. I want to be straight and honest, and help people, and I've just been thinkin' about it—it isn't fair to plug what the way we've been doing—it isn't right to pretend that it's all first-class when there's frozen grain in it."

"How's that, Buddie?" Mr. Perkins grumbled serious. "Buddie, dear," he said, "you're gettin' cluttered up with a lot of bum ideas. A farmer has to look out for his own side. They're own again to fleece him, and he's got to fool them if he can. I'm honest myself, Bud, you know that; but there's nothing pleases me quite so well as to be able to get eighty-seven cents a bushel for wheat that I would only be gettin' fifty-three for if I hadn't taken a little trouble when it was fillin' it up."

"But it would make a fellow feel mean to get caught," Bud said, trying to get hold of an argument that would have weight.

"A fellow needn't be caught, Bud, if he ain't too graspin'. You don't need to plug every time. They know blame well when a fellow has some frozen wheat, and it don't do to draw time out of Northern every time you're safe to plug it just one time above what it is. Oh, it's a game, Bud, and it takes a good player. Now, son, you run around and bring up the boys, and don't worry 'em, you be worryin' about religion."

"That's what happened me brother Jimmy, your own poor uncle. He got all taken up with the Seventh Day gettin' two Sundays a week—he wouldn't let them work Saturday and they wouldn't work Sunday. Your poor uncle was afraid to let them work on Saturday, for according to his religion you'd be damned if you let your hired help work just the same as if you worked yourself; but he used to say he'd be damned if he'd let them sit idle and him payin' them big wages, and was a bad mis-ump, I tell you. And then there was old man Redmond; he got religion and began to give back things he said he'd stole—brought back bags to me Steadman that he said he stole at a threshin' at my place; but they had Steadman's name on them."

(To be continued)



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