

simply wondering what I can do next to keep Tim Butterworth straight. I stepped into the grocery on my way home, and I learned that he has not been at his work all day."

"The best thing you can do in the matter is to wash your hands of him. He is a black sheep, and no effort of yours can make him a white one," Mr. Templeton declared.

"Not mine alone, I know," Miss Margaret quietly answered, her face lighting with a sweet smile as though suddenly there had flashed to her the thought of a Help that would not fail her in her effort.

Her father made no reply, and presently the conversation turned upon other things. But not for long could Miss Margaret's attention wander from the boy who had given her so much trouble, and whom, in spite of his waywardness, she could not let slip from her grasp without making one more attempt to hold him. Still thinking of Tim when she set out for the Sunday school choir practice, she purposely walked in the direction of his home, hoping to catch sight of him. She was not disappointed. As she turned the corner, Tim's short, sturdy figure could be seen hanging over the fence. He did not hear the newcomer's light footsteps, and a sudden flush dyed his freckled face when she stood beside him and said quietly:

"Good-evening, Tim."

A pair of brown eyes sought the ground as the owner answered in muffled tones:

"Good-evening, Miss Margaret."

"I'm glad I've met you, Tim. We can walk to rehearsal together," Miss Margaret added in her gracious way.

"I wasn't going," Tim said.

"Not going, Tim?" There was a note of distress in the speaker's voice. "But I'm counting on your help to-night with that new song. Surely you will not disappoint me?"

"I wasn't at work to-day," Tim declared, looking up half-defiantly. "Father don't know, nor Aunt Nanny, either. I've been down in the meadow; and I'm going to be a farmer, in spite of all anybody can say or do. I thought I'd tell you, and then you wouldn't want me with you."

"I knew before I saw you that you were not at your work to-day, and I do want you to come with me to-night," Miss Margaret answered, quietly.

The lad hesitated for a moment, and then, with a brief "All right," stepped outside the gate and walked along with his teacher. Not a word was spoken for two blocks, and then Tim said, keeping his eyes on his shoes:

"I wouldn't blame you for not having any use for me, Miss Margaret—after your getting me the place. But I couldn't stand that kind of work any longer, and I just had to cut and run."

"Like the soldier who wasn't brave enough to stick to his post when the real work of the battle-

field called him," Miss Margaret said, quietly.

Tim winced, but made no reply, and she added:

"When you told me you wanted to be a grocer, Tim, I got you the place in Mr. Berry's. Farmer Lee is a warm friend of mine, but if I were to speak to him about you I fear he would answer: 'I should not feel safe in taking a boy on your recommendation.' He might, you know, Tim, because everybody has heard that I passed my word for you at Mr. Berry's. Folks won't think it counts for very much."

Tim was silent for a moment, and then said, throwing back his head: "You've never broken your word to me, Miss Margaret, and I'll just stand by you for all I'm worth."

"The best way for you to stand by me is to stand by yourself, Tim, and do what you know you should. You can do it, if you will. I've always believed there's the making of a good man in you, and I believe it still, if only you wouldn't shirk. I wish you would promise me to try and make good the word I gave for you to Mr. Berry, that you are a boy he can rely upon to do his work well."

"I might promise you, Miss Margaret, and then when the fit comes on I'll just have to break loose and go as I did to-day," Tim said, with a note of despair in his voice.

"You can withstand the temptation, Tim, if you accept the Help I have so many times talked to you of." And now, Miss Margaret's voice was sweet and earnest. "When the temptation comes to shirk your duty, will you turn to God and say, 'Help me to keep faithful?'"

They had reached the schoolhouse, and as they entered the door Tim answered, slowly: "I'll try, Miss Margaret."

As the summer drew to a close, Miss Margaret and her father were seated on the porch enjoying the cool evening air, when Tim Butterworth made his appearance at the gate and stood hesitatingly there.

"Do you want to speak to me, Tim?" Miss Margaret asked, rising and making her way down the path.

"I just wanted to tell you, Miss Margaret, that Mr. Berry is going to put me on the wagon to-morrow. He says I'm steady enough to be trusted there now."

"Oh, Tim, how glad I am for you! And you always did want to drive a horse," Miss Margaret exclaimed; adding in lower tones: "You are growing stronger, Tim. And the dear Christ is helping you; I have seen it for a long time."

"Yes, Miss Margaret," the boy said, and now the brown eyes met hers unflinchingly. "I'm getting it slowly, and it isn't as hard as it was at first."

A moment later he passed on his way, and Miss Margaret returned to the porch.

"Will it pay, my dear, to take

all the trouble you are taking with that lad?" Mr. Templeton asked, as his daughter seated herself beside him.

"It has paid," Miss Margaret answered, a tender look stealing into her eyes, as she leaned forward and watched the sturdy figure disappear around the corner.

WHEN IT PAYS TO SPEAK PROMPTLY.

It is curious how quickly a bad impulse gets control of one's tongue. A gust of anger sweeps over us, and in an instant angry words are spoken. Envy stirs in our hearts, and out comes a spiteful speech. The thunder-peal does not follow the lightning any more promptly than wrong words follow wrong thoughts.

The strange thing is that we are not in such a hurry to speak out the good that is in us. When it is a question of sympathizing with somebody in trouble, we seem to be afflicted with an impediment in our speech. If we are sorry for something we have done, how hard it is to put our penitence into words! Week after week people go about with heavy hearts, scarcely able to eat or sleep, and quite unable to enjoy themselves, just because they cannot make up their minds to say the two-little words, "Forgive me."

Things would go better with us if we should just reverse our ordinary way of doing. If an impatient or resentful spirit is in our hearts, let us shut our teeth down over the disagreeable words that are clamouring to get out. If we have to choose between keeping still and saying unkind things, let us be dumb for a time.

On the other hand, we should be quick to speak if we have anything sweet and helpful to say. If a friend is in trouble, let us not leave him without a word of sympathy. If he is having a hard fight with the lower nature in himself, let us find something encouraging to say before he fails because his strength is exhausted, or wins a victory without our help. If we have done a wrong to anyone, let us be quick to say we are sorry. Forgiveness is given grudgingly sometimes, when penitence is long delayed, but it is wonderful how quickly resentment will be wiped out of a heart when close upon the heels of the wrong done follow the words, "I am sorry. Forgive me."

THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

A fox was once caught in a trap by his tail, and in order to get away was forced to leave it behind. Knowing that without a tail he would be a laughing-stock for all his fellows, he resolved to try to induce them to part with theirs. So at the next assembly of foxes, he made a speech on the unprofitableness of tails in general, and the inconvenience of a fox's tail in particular, adding that he had never felt so easy as since he had given up his own. When he had sat down, a sly old fellow rose, and waving his long brush with a graceful air, said, with a sneer, that if, like the last speaker, he had lost his tail, nothing further would have been needed to convince him; but till such an accident should happen, he should certainly vote in favour of tails.

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