

are a rough set as everybody says, and I, for one, am willing to be improved."

"And I," "And I," "And I," responded several eager voices.

"I t-tell you w-what," stammered George Bangs; "I mo-mo-move we or-or-organize a society for the improvement of our m-m-manners, and put in Tom Snow for pr-pr-president."

"All right," said Tom with a laugh; we won't spend time talking about it either; and I motion that we set to work at once, and clear up the school-room, and put things in order."

"Splendid!" cried Florence Caldwell. "I will sweep, while the boys pick up the wood. Sister Mary, you run home and get our stove-brush and blacking, and the rest of you go to the woods and bring some pine boughs and bitter-sweet berries to put over the windows and door and the black-board."

"And I will run home and get my new illuminated motto, 'Order is Heaven's first law,' and hang it over the clock where we can all see it," said Flora Judd.

The result was that thirty willing pairs of hands had transformed the untidy, plain, little school-room into a bower of beauty before the return of the teacher at one o'clock. She came in with a weary and discouraged look, her eyes very red from weeping, and a large patch of brown paper on her forehead, where one of George Burrow's chestnuts had struck her that morning.

When she opened the school-room door, and found the floor, which was usually littered up with fragments of lunches, apple-cores and chestnut and walnut shells, neatly swept; the large cast-iron stove polished as black as the coats of the crows that kept up such a cawing on the neighboring pines; the bare walls decorated with green boughs and red berries, and a little bouquet of scarlet geranium on the teacher's desk, and the illuminated motto hanging up behind it—her look of pleased surprise was touching enough to move the most prosaic of her pupils. In a corner near the desk stood a slim, tough, walnut "water-pail" which had never had been placed there had not the boys made up their minds that there should be a water-pail for its use. The water-pail was above it.

The scholars, who had by their disorderly habits for the previous week nearly driven this patient little teacher to distraction, were now quietly in their seats, and at the first touch of the bell took out their books, piled all but the one each needed at first neatly on one side of their desks, and fell to studying with a will.

The tearful smile which brightened up Miss Bardwell's face, as she took in the situation, from the motto over her clock to the individual demeanor of her pupils who seemed to be carrying out its sentiment, would have completely upset the newly-acquired dignity of the more thoughtless ones, had not Tom Snow's sharp eyes seen everything, and a warning shake of his curly head kept them in order.

Miss Bardwell said nothing about the happy change in the deportment of her pupils but the grateful effect penetrated her like a pleasant odor, and the old-time restful, yet cheerful expression gradually stole over and shone from her sweet face. She complimented, however, the good taste that had prompted and carried out the adornment of the school-room. As the remaining days of the term sped on, she did everything in her power to show her appreciation of the good conduct of her scholars. Never a school before made such rapid progress in study as well as marked improvement in manners, and there never had been such a delightful winter spent in that old Wheeler district school.—*N. E. Journal of Education.*

WAITING FOR THE GRIST.

BY MINNIE B. FENWICK.

"It is strange," said a gentleman who sat next to me in the car, and with whom I had struck up quite an acquaintance, "What an influence a look, a word, or the little act of a perfect stranger will sometimes have upon a person."

"Yes," said I; "more than any of us realize."

"It was the simple act of a stranger that changed the whole course of my life."

"Indeed! How so?"

"When I was a boy, my father moved to the then Far West—Ohio. It was before

the days of steam, and no great mills thundered on her river-banks, but occasionally there was a little grist-mill by the side of some small stream, and hither, whenever the water was up, the whole neighborhood flocked with their sacks of corn. 'First come, first served.' Sometimes we had to wait two or three days for our turn. I generally was the one sent from our house, for, while I was too small to be of much account on the farm, I was as good as a man to carry a grist to mill. So I was not at all surprised one morning when my father said, 'Henry, you can get up old roan and go to the mill to-day.'

"Saunders's mill was ten miles away; but I had made the trip so often that it did not seem far. I believe one becomes more attached to an old mill than to any other building. I can see just how it looked as it stood there under the sycamores, with its huge wheel and rough clapboard sides.

"When I arrived, I found the North Branch and Rocky Fork folks there ahead of me, and I knew there was no hope of getting home that day; but I was not at all sorry, for my basket was well filled with provisions, and Mr. Saunders always opened his big barn for us to sleep in; so it was no unpleasant time we had while waiting for our grist. This time there was an addition to the number that had been in the habit of gathering, from time to time, in the old Saunders barn—a young fellow about my own age, probably a little older. His name was Charley Allen, and his father had bought a farm over on the Brush Creek road. He was sociable and friendly, but I instinctively felt that he had 'more manners' than the rest of us. The evening was spent, as usual, in relating coarse jokes and playing cards. Although I was not accustomed to such things at home, I had become so used to it at the mill that it had long since ceased to shock me, and, indeed, I was fast becoming a very interested spectator.

"Well, boys, it is time for us fellers to go to roost," said Jim Finley, one of the greatest roughs on the Rocky Fork, as he threw down his pack of cards and began to undress. We much undressing would it be thought it was not now; but we were so busy with our own affairs that we did not notice Charley Allen's departure. Heyday! we've got a met with no response. The silence was only broken by the drowsy cattle below, and the twittering swallows overhead. More than one rough man wiped a tear from his eyes as he went silently to his bed on the hay. I had always been in the habit of praying at home, but I never thought of such a thing at Saunders's Mill. As I lay awake that night in the old barn, thinking of Charley Allen's courage, and what an effect it had upon the men, I firmly resolved that in the future I would do right. I little thought how soon my courage would be tested. Just after dinner I got my grist, and started for home. When I arrived at Albright's gate, where I turned off to go home, I found the old squire waiting for me. I saw in a moment that something had gone wrong. I had always stood in the greatest awe of the old gentleman because he was the rich man of the neighborhood, and now I felt my heart beginning to beat very fast. As soon as I came near he said, 'Did you go through this gate yesterday?' I could easily have denied it, as it was before daylight when I went through, and I quite as often went the other way. Charley Allen kneeling in the barn came to my mind like a flash, and before I had time to listen to the tempter I said, 'Yes, sir; I did.'

"Are you sure you shut and pinned the gate?" he asked.

"This question staggered me. I remembered distinctly that I did not. I could pull the pin out without getting off my horse, but I could not put it in again; so I carelessly rode away, and left it open.

"I—I—I—"

"Out with it; tell just what you did!"

"I left it open," I said, abruptly.

"Well, you let the cattle in, and they have destroyed all my early potatoes—a terrible piece of business!"

"I'm very sorry, I'd—"

"Talking won't help matters now; but remember, boy, remember that sorrow don't make potatoes—sorrow don't make potatoes."

"I felt very badly about the matter, for I was really sorry that the old gentleman had lost his potatoes, and then I expected to be severely reprimanded at home; but I soon

found that they knew nothing of the matter, and after several days had passed I began to rest quite easy. Alas for human hopes! one rainy afternoon I saw the squire riding down the lane. I ran off to the barn ashamed to face him, and afraid to meet my father. They sat on the porch and talked for a long time. At last my curiosity overcame my fear, and I stole back to the house, and went into mother's room to see if I could hear what they were talking about. 'Why the boy could be spared well enough, but he don't know anything about the business,' said my father. 'There is one thing he does know,' said the squire, 'He knows how to tell the truth.' He then related the circumstance which I so much dreaded to have my father hear. After he had gone, my father called me to him, and told me that the squire was going to start a store in the village, and wanted a boy to help, and that I could go if I wanted to. I went and remained in the village, store until it blossomed out into a city store; and people say that I got my start in life when I entered Albright's store, but I will always maintain that I got it while I was waiting for the grist.—*S. S. Times.*

THE MISSION OF ONE HUMBLE DEED.

BY REV. THERON BROWN.

A young Swiss theological student, who had learned the English language, became intensely interested in reading a little English tract entitled, "It is I." He had a troubled friend, to whom he knew the golden words of comfort in that little book would be a great blessing. The friend could not read English, but so eager was he to communicate to him the precious treatise that he wrote out a French translation of it, and put it into his hands.

Some time afterward, when he was just about to be settled in his field of pastoral labor, the student lost his health, and went to Piedmont, to try the effect of the Italian climate. His heart was sad, for these days and weeks of enforced idleness seemed a waste, and he mourned over his suspended hopes of usefulness, and say, "Thy will be done." That he had done any good he was too diffident to think. It was hard to resign his hopes of usefulness, and say, "Thy will be done."

One day during his stay in the mountains, he saw, sitting in the door of a little cottage, a pale young man with a bandage round his head, and one arm hung in a sling. The student rightly suggested that this was one of the Sardinian soldiers sent home disabled from the field of Solferino. He approached the youth, thinking to say something in kindness—possibly something that could prove a blessing.

As he drew nearer he saw that the young soldier held a little book in his hand. It was in the French language. The student sat down, and began to talk with the young man, and the latter showed him what he had been reading. The little book, he said, had belonged to a pious comrade in the army, and it was the daily food of his soul—till death in the battle took him beyond its need. Dying he gave the book to his friend. The young man had read it again and again, and he told what a comfort it was to him.

The student read the title, "It is I." It was the tract he had himself translated in Switzerland. He did not know before that his work had ever found its way into print. But it had returned to him like bread flung on the waters.—*American Messenger.*

HOW JANE WAS CHANGED.

Mr. Moody tells of an Episcopal clergyman in England who was staying at a hotel, and was waited on by a little girl. He asked her, "Do you ever pray?"

"Oh, no, sir!" she replied; "we have no time here to pray. I am too busy to do that."

"I want you to promise me that during the next two months you will say three words of prayer every night, and when I come here at the end of that time I will give you half a crown."

"All right," she said; "I will do it."

"Well, I want you to say every night, 'Lord, save me.'"

He left, and two months after, when he came again to the same hotel, he enquired for Jane, and was told: "Oh, she got too good to stay at a hotel, and has gone to the parsonage up yonder."

He went to see her, and as she opened the

door for him, she said: "Oh, you blessed man, you! I don't want your half crown; I have got enough already."

And then she told him how she had, at first, just carelessly gone over the words as she was going to bed at nights. But after the first two weeks she began to think what the word save meant. Then she got a Bible and found the words: "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," and the prayer was no longer a mere form.

"Now," she said, "I am happy, and I don't want your half crown. But I am so thankful you asked me to say that prayer." —*Ocean Grove Record.*

SOME TIME AGO a regiment in a garrison town had a mess dinner. There was a young officer present who for some time was addicted to drink. He had determined to give it up, and succeeded for some weeks, but then came the monthly guest night when all were supposed to drink. As the sparkling wine went round the table, he passed it by, and several of his brother officers laughed at him. At last he said, "Is there not one of you who will stand by a poor fellow;" but none would do so. He took his wine, and he was carried to bed drunk. That day fortnight some of his brother officers stood by his grave, and one of them who stood there was one of those who had sat at the table and did not determine to stand by his weak brother, and help him in his hour of difficulty. Never let it be said of any one of us that he had shown an example of want of sympathy or failed in helping a weak brother.—*Arch-deacon Stewart.*

Question Corner.—No. 18.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed Editor NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 206. Where do we get an account of their release and their return to their own land?
- 207. Who threw the three men into the fiery furnace, and over what country did he reign?
- 208. Who was the first king of all Israel and how was the country governed before they had a king?
- 209. Who were the last two judges of Israel and what other office did they hold besides that of judge?
- 210. How many years did David reign over Israel?
- 211. What city was the capital of the country during the first seven years of David's reign?
- 212. Who was David's first wife?
- 213. What man was spoken to by a beast of burden?
- 214. During the reign of what king of Israel was there a famine so great that an ass's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver?
- 215. What prophet used meal as an antidote for poison?
- 216. How was it that in the building of Solomon's temple no sound of axe or any tool of iron was heard?

BIBLE ACROSTIC.

- 1. Taken by the Medes.
  - 2. Unending existence.
  - 3. Sang a song with Deborah.
  - 4. Worketh no ill.
  - 5. A precious stone.
- The initials form a highly prized book.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 16.

- 181. Ananias and Sapphira. Acts v. 1, 10.
- 182. Paul. Acts xxviii. 3, 5.
- 183. At Melita. Acts xxviii. 1, 5.
- 184. Stephen. Acts vii. 59, 60.
- 185. Matthias. Acts i. 23.
- 186. The queen of Sheba. 1 Kings x. 1.
- 187. Stephen. Acts vii. 59, 60.
- 188. Moses. Ex. xxxiv. 28.
- 189. In the land of Shinar. Gen. xi. 2.
- 190. To the church in Smyrna. Rev. ii. 10.
- 191. Manoaah. Judges xiii.
- 192. The widow's son. 1 Kings xvii. 17, 22.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 16.—Dora Foison, 12; Rosalie A. Geary 11.