

THE NEW SCHOLAR.

BY J. K. BLOOMFIELD.

"Girls, what do you think? We are to have a new scholar!" said Florence McFairland, entering the schoolroom in a somewhat excited manner.

"How have you heard the news, Flo?" asked Georgie Converse. "I hope it is to be someone we shall all like."

"I can't say for certain, but just as I had finished practising and was coming out of the music-room I overheard Miss Walker and Mrs. Ensley talking about the new scholar that was soon to be here and what classes they should put her in. They said something about her being delicate and not much advanced in her studies."

"Oh! I should not wonder if it is Ida Bowman," exclaimed Susie Reed.

"Ida Bowman? Who is she?" asked a chorus of voices.

"Why, haven't you heard of the Bowmans who have recently come here?"

"Do you mean the new-comers who have bought the Miller property and forwarded for it such elegant furniture from Boston?"

"Yes. Some of the family came on last week. They passed us on their way to church and looked quite stylish. Mother says there is an only daughter about my age, but she is in rather delicate health and did not come on with them, as she is still under the doctor's care and they wished to get settled first."

"The Miller mansion," as it was called, was indeed an elegant residence set back upon a high knoll and surrounded by fine old trees. There was a broad carriage drive up to the house encircling a smoothly-mown lawn, with here and there a few choice blooming shrubs. It was upon this lawn that Susie Reed first saw the young girl of whom they had been talking.

"Girls, she has come! Ida Bowman has come! I saw her on my way to school, and she is just lovely. She was in a wheel chair on the lawn. Her lap was full of flowers and a splendid Newfoundland dog seemed to be on guard. Once or twice he actually went behind her chair and pushed it as she directed him. They made a beautiful picture, for Ida has long golden ringlets, and she was dressed in light blue silk or something of the kind."

"I wonder if she is a cripple?" said Georgie Converse. "Well, we must pet and make much of her, for it will be just splendid to have a rich and aristocratic girl in our school. We've had so many poor, ill-dressed ones of late that I declare it makes the schoolroom actually look dingy."

"So, Georgie, you are for having only bright butterflies of fashion about you?" said a pleasant voice near the group of girls.

Georgie looked up and felt somewhat abashed as she found Miss Walker had, unnoticed, entered the room, where a few who usually went together were already assembled.

"Don't you think beauty and wealth attractive, Miss Walker?" asked Florence McFairland.

"Certainly, in some respects. But you must remember that 'handsome is that handsome does.' I have noticed of late, and with regret, little cliques among you and that some plainly-dressed but otherwise bright scholars are receiving the cold shoulder. I should be extremely sorry if Ida Bowman's coming adds to this feeling of exclusiveness simply because her father happens to be blessed with a larger share of this world's wealth."

"Quite a lecture," whispered Susie Reed, as the bell rang and they turned to take their seats. "Well, anyhow, I don't mean to associate with all sorts of people in or out of school."

Florence laughed, but Georgie looked sober. She was thinking of what Miss Walker had just said and was wondering if she had not of late somewhat slighted a few of the scholars. But Susie Reed, Flo McFairland, and Kate Bryant did have such a way of making others follow in their lead. She saw, though, that she was becoming too greatly influenced by them for one who had already professed a desire to become a follower of the lowly Jesus.

A new influence, however, was to come among them. Ida Bowman, in her wheel-chair, propelled by a pleasant-looking attendant and headed by the stately Newfoundland dog, daily made her appearance at the schoolroom door, where she was left for a few recitations.

She was not exactly a cripple, but had

fallen out of a high swing and hurt her thigh. The fright had also given a shock to her nervous system, so she was very ill for many months, and when once more able to be about appeared very weak and delicate and still suffered pain in her thigh, so the doctor objected to her walking about much until her general health improved and she grew stronger; so she spent much of her time out of doors in a wheel-chair with Nero for her companion. Study had been imperatively neglected for nearly two years, so she was much behind those of her own age and anxious now to make up for lost time.

Susie Reed, as near neighbor, was almost officiously polite to the little stranger on her way to school. Florence McFairland too tried to make herself of importance to the new scholar. But somehow, though gentle and polite to all, Ida seemed to more readily accept kindnesses from the poorer children. To their surprise, the very ones whom they had slighted as almost beneath their notice, Ida would gather around her at recess, tell them stories, or share with them her fruits, nuts, or simple confections.

"Why, she is not the least bit proud or stuck up, like some of the girls," said one.

"No, indeed!" added another, "she talked just as sweetly to me yesterday as though I was dressed in silk. I don't believe she would hurt our feelings by calling us, as Susie Reed has, 'the calico girls,' just because we can't dress as fine as they do."

"She is just a dear little lady," said another, "and mother says no true lady is ever proud or stuck up."

"That's so," responded Bessie Clark. "And I believe she is a true Christian, too, for she is gentle and patient even when in pain. And she never gets angry as some of the girls do, and she looked so sorry the other day when one of them became excited about something and almost struck her schoolmate. I overheard Ida very gently say to them as she tried to make peace between them, 'Jesus tells us that we must love one another.'"

Ida Bowman was indeed a mystery and a study to them all, but it was not long before her influence for good was felt in the school, and the proud, haughty girls found that if they would make friends with her it must be in a different way than the exclusive one they had devised and talked over. Mrs. Ensley and Miss Walker noticed with pleasure the greater harmony among their pupils, and remarked,

"Ho true it is a little leaven leaveneth the whole. Ida Bowman shows us this by almost unconsciously scattering about her good seeds that are beginning to bear rich fruits."

And thus the new scholar proved a blessing and example to them all by her sweet, gentle Christian ways.—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

HOW THE PRAYER-MEETING WAS STARTED.

"But, Auntie, do you really mean that you think I ought to start a boys' prayer-meeting? Why, they'd all laugh at the idea of seeing me, the most mischievous boy in school, in one, and if I were to start one they would all be sure to go just to see what new tricks I was up to."

"No, Dick, I did not say that. In fact, I am not sure that it would be the best thing. What I want is to see you ready to stand up for your colors, not afraid of anything the other boys may say or do. If the Lord wants you to start a prayer-meeting, He Himself will tell you so, and will give you the needed strength. It seems to me your work just now is to get rid of the reputation of 'the most mischievous boy in school.'"

Dick Eastman, aged fourteen, had lived with "Auntie Madge" ever since he could remember, for his parents had been killed in a railway accident when he was a mere baby, and his aunt had undertaken the care of him. Naturally fond of fun, he was a recognized leader in pranks, and much mischief that did not belong there was laid at his door just on account of his reputation. On the evening of which I write he had gone as Aunt Madge's escort to the church prayer-meeting. An evangelist, passing through the town, had consented to lead the meeting, and through that one service many souls were led to Christ. After he had finished his talk he asked all those who had decided to lead a Christian life to stand up. Among others, our friend Dick arose. This was what he and his aunt were talking

about when he asked the question that heads our story.

Long after he was in bed that night he lay awake thinking it all over and wishing, oh! so much, that some of the other boys might feel the peace he felt, and that they could have a little prayer-meeting. Yet it would be very hard, he thought, to tell them about the change in himself. When he fell asleep it was with the decision that he would try to play no more unkind tricks, and that he would do just what he felt the Lord wished him to do about the other matter. For had not "Auntie Madge" said He would give the strength? And didn't she know?

The next morning on his way to school Dick met his two special friends a little before they passed the house where lame Herbert White, the oldest and brightest boy in school, lived. Herbert was rather reserved in his ways, and on account of his deformity could not often mingle with the others in their sports. Consequently, he was by no means a favorite. He was so fine a scholar, however, that they all had great respect for him.

As the boys passed his gate they saw one end of his crutch sticking through the fence, but he was not in sight. The other two wanted to pull it out and hide it, for then Herbert would have to hunt for it, probably a long time, and would be late for school, perhaps would not go at all. Wouldn't it be fine to have the best scholar, the one who was always held up as their example, re-proved? Dick refused. The other two looked at him, and were about to ask the reason, but just then more of their friends came along and the question was dropped.

At recess, with all the boys around, one of the two exclaimed: "I say, Dick, why under the sun wouldn't you do that this morning? You know what I mean."

Dick, with heightened color, was about to explain when Herbert White hobbled up to him, and with one hand on his shoulder, said in a clear voice: "Yes, and I know, too; perhaps I can answer as well as he. This morning as I was in the garden, three boys, one of whom was Dick, passed by. My crutch had slipped from my hand and was lying in plain sight. The other two wanted to hide it, but Dick refused to have anything to do with such an act, and I shall tell you why, for I am certain he wants to have it known. Last evening he and I were the only boys from this school who went out to meeting. He stood up and said he was going to be a Christian. I wanted to do so too, but I thought I'd wait to see if it made any difference in his school life. It has changed him already, and now that I see there is something in religion, I am going to be a Christian, too."

The room was perfectly still for two or three minutes. Then the boy who had suggested hiding Herbert's crutch said: "We have fifteen minutes; can't we boys have a prayer-meeting right here? Herbert, will you lead? First let me say that I was one of the two, and that I am very sorry for my thoughtlessness."

Herbert commenced, and there were very few who had not taken part when the bell rang and the teacher entered the room. Every week since those boys have had their meeting. Some of them have come to Christ and others are seriously thinking about giving themselves to Him.—Christian Intelligencer.

A CORRESPONDENT of the British Medical Journal relates a curious case of a man who was suffering from the gases formed by imperfect indigestion, and whose breath took fire, with an explosion, when he was attempting to blow out a lucifer. The medical narrator adds that he sent to the patient a prescription from which alcohol was excluded. Doubt has been cast on the cases of alcoholic combustion of the body, but if the body can give forth gases which burn during life, there is nothing incredible in the fact that, life being absent, the body should be the victim of internal combustion which there is nothing to extinguish. In the case above referred to, the lips were burnt, though the fire went out at once. Perhaps those who find an argument for alcohol because of its alleged occasional formation in the stomach will give inflammable gas the benefit of their commendation.

THE NATIONAL TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL, located in Chicago, is filled with patients. In no case has alcohol been used, and the death-rate has been much lower than in other hospitals in the city.

Question Corner.—No. 20.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

- 1. He was a Jewish nobleman.
2. He lived to the east of Jordan.
3. He took pity on a king in distress.
4. He refused all reward for his generosity.
5. He made his age a reason for not going to the king's court.
6. He allowed his son to take the honor due him.
7. His kindness was remembered by the king even in the hour of death.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 1. Who asked "Who can tell if God will turn and repent?"
2. Where is the expression used, "I will put upon you none other burden?"
3. Where is the prophecy, "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down saith the Lord?"
4. Who says, "We have watched for a nation that could not save us?"
5. Who lamented "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth?"

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS NO. 19.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMAS.

JABEL.—NAIL.—Judges iv. 21.

- 1. J-onatha-n . . . . . 2 Sam. i. 26.
2. A-un-a . . . . . Luke ii. 36.
3. E-i-i . . . . . 1 Sam. iv. 18.
3. I-ewne-l . . . . . Proverbs xxxi. 1.
CALEB AND RAHAB.—Num. xiv. 38; Josh. ii. 3.
1. C-heba-r . . . . . Ezek. x. 15.
2. A-lexandri-a . . . . . Acts xviii. 21.
3. I-ldna-h . . . . . Isaiah xxxvii. 8.
4. E-lish-a . . . . . 1 Kings xix. 16.
6. B-aal-zebu-b . . . . . 2 Kings i. 2.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 1. Job. 4; 15-17.
2. 2 Sam. 23; 1-3.
3. 1 Chron. 4; 10.
4. 1 Chron. 4; 10.

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