



INVITATIONS.

One Saturday afternoon Margaret Harper came alone to visit Cora and Nannie, and after tea Jonas walked home with her. On the way they had a little talk.

"Have you made up your mind yet what kind of a woman you are going to be?" Jonas asked.

"Oh, yes indeed!" said Margaret; "I'm going to be a very good woman; a Christian, you know; like Nannie's Aunt Helen."

"Have you begun at it yet?"

"What do you mean?" asked Margaret, with a little laugh; "I'm not old enough now to be a Christian."

"Not old enough to be invited anywhere, and to say that you will go?" exclaimed Jonas, looking astonished.

Margaret laughed again. "Oh, yes," she said; "I'm old enough for that; but I mean—well—I'm not good enough to be a Christian."

"What is 'being a Christian'?"

"O Jonas! I know, of course, but I can't tell it in words."

"I can," said Jonas; "it is accepting Jesus' invitation and getting ready to go. Aren't you old enough for that? or are you like the folks who made excuses?"

"Who were they?"

"Oh, they were some people who were invited to a grand party; instead of getting ready, they began to make all sorts of excuses."

"How funny!" said Margaret; "I don't believe there ever were any such people; folks don't act so about going to a grand party, Jonas; they are glad of the chance to go."

"It's a Bible story," said Jonas, "and one that Jesus told, himself; he told it to show how very silly the people were who treated his invitations in that way."

"I wouldn't treat them so," said Margaret.

"Why, yes, you would! You are doing it. You just said that you are not old enough to accept his invitation, and not good enough, and all those silly excuses that you wouldn't think of making if you were invited to a party."

"That's different," said Margaret.

"I know it is different; a party only lasts one afternoon, or evening, and Jesus' invitation lasts for ever. He never said that people had to be old, or good, before they could say 'yes,' and set about getting ready to go. What he said was, 'Come; for all things are now ready.' All we have to do is to obey his directions. Aren't you old enough to obey your mother?"

"Why, yes," said Margaret; "of course."

"Well, then, you are old enough to obey Jesus," said Jonas. "Just as fast as you find out what he says, you do it—or don't do it, whichever it is—and that is all the part you have. I wonder what you are going to say to Jesus' invitation—'yes' or 'no'? I'm going to watch you and find out. I can tell by the way you act, you know, even if you don't say a word about it."

SUSIE'S ESCORT.

Mr. Morton had a letter to write after breakfast, so he was not ready to go to his office till nearly school time. When he came into the dining-room to bid his wife good-bye, he found her putting on Susie's hat.

"Am I to have the pleasure of a young lady's company?" asked Susie's father, with a funny smile. "May I escort you to school, Miss Susie?"

Susie did not know what "escort" meant, but she knew that her father would walk to school with her, and that made her very proud and happy.

"I do not know what to give you for recess, Susie," said her mother.

"Never mind," her father said; "we will find something at the corner store."

Then Susie kissed her mother and went along with her father. They went into a store, and Susie selected a big, red apple.

"Do you need a slate pencil or a sponge?" asked Mr. Morton.

"No, father, thank you," said Susie, glad to have her father think so kindly of her needs.

By and by they came to a crossing that had such a high step it was quite a trouble to Susie when she was alone; but it was so easy now that she had her father's strong arm to help her.

Did you ever think what a happy thing it is to have our Heavenly Father caring for us wherever we are? He has promised to be with his children and provide for all their needs, if only they will trust and obey him. He will help us over the hard places and keep us from danger, and make our hearts glad with his kindness. Here is a sweet little Bible prayer: "Let thine hand help me!" Do you want to say this to "Our Father"?—Selected.

When summer is ended and winter draws near, most of our trees drop all their leaves. But the pine tree keeps green all winter. This is what Marjory said about it:

"I know why the pine tree doesn't drop all his clothes when winter comes, like the rest of the trees. The rest of them haven't anything to do all winter, but the pine tree has to stay dressed up for Christmas. It's very busy then."