

actions honest and true. May we do our part wisely and kindly, and will thou give us a victory? And as we set about the work for our dear Master, help us to purify ourselves even as He is pure. Bless our organization, and bless each one of us, for thy own name's sake. And in token of our earnest purpose, hear us together say—Amen."

And the boys' amen was prompt and hearty.

As they resumed their seats Mrs. Lyste drew from the table drawer a new blank book. On its first fair page was engrossed in large script:

OUR UNION.

Motto—We strive to conquer.

On the opposite page,

Our Bond and Pledge.

"We the undersigned, do hereby bind ourselves in a Union that shall have for its aim any worthy work of love to God and good-will to man that our hands may find to do. And that we may prove ourselves worthy members of a pure Union, we pledge ourselves to use no profane language, and to abstain from the use of alcohol and tobacco in all their forms, and to maintain the cause of truth and justice always and everywhere, by the help of our Lord and King, Jesus Christ.

As Mrs. Lyste read aloud the written words, she took from the drawer a jewel casket which she opened, displaying to the view seven beautiful scarf pins of exquisite workmanship, the design being a golden cross set with a tiny opal.

"This bond and pledge is for three months," she said. "Each boy who signs his name to it will please accept one of these opal crosses, and wear it, as a reminder of the act, so long as he keeps his pledge inviolate. You will observe that I wear one, and that I here subscribe my name to the bond and pledge. Will you follow me?"

She placed the book and jewel-case before Billy Williams.

"No more cigarettes, hey? Well—here goes!" laughed that lad as he traced his name in big, sprawling characters. Then he selected a pin, and while Will Burton was signing he fastened it in his scarf.

"I reckon I can stand out for three months," laughed Willie Davis as he signed. "It's pretty middling tough," demurred Will Martin. "Don't believe I can hang out without a smoke for three months."

"You'll have to give up your pin if you break your pledge," said Rob Denlow. "It's a mighty pretty pin too."

One by one they signed. If it cost them something, they bravely concealed all the hurt of it. It was the first favor she had ever asked of them, and they loved her too well to refuse to follow in her lead.

"Thank you very much for the pin, Mrs. Lyste," spoke up Willie Schuyler. "It is beautiful. An opal is such a curious and interesting stone. I always liked it better than any other gem. Mine fairly glows now."

"It is only a tiny amount of water imbedded in silix," said Mrs. Lyste. "It catches the light—and gives it out. It is a fit symbol for us and our work. I thought you would all like opals."

"The water in the opal is to make us remember that water is the drink of our union, I suppose," said Will Martin.

"And the cross—" began Tom, and hesitated.

"Is the sign by which we are to conquer," said Mrs. Lyste.

Then began a practical talk about the proposed plan of breaking up the B—Street Sunday playing and the beer-drinking, and of winning the players to a better way. Mrs. Lyste threw out some suggestions, and encouraged the boys to make others.

"I have thought so often that a work among boys could be so well and skilfully done by boys, if we could only get the boys to enter upon it. Now that the experiment is fairly started, I confess that I am full of eagerness to see how it will work, to see if my ideas have been correct ones. The only general rule I am willing to lay down for you is the Golden Rule. Work by that always—singly or together, just as your judgment shows—but work with good-will in your hearts. Don't get angry or discouraged, at repulses or insults or sneers, or even worse."

"No," broke in impetuous Billy Williams "but if Sam Low—he's the chap I'm going for—ups and talks back, and pitches in to

lick me, and more'n likely he will, I'll let him have it. I'll pummel him—but I'll fetch him. You'll see him in Sunday-school 'fore I'm done with him."

The boys laughed heartily. Even Mrs. Lyste joined in, though she said reproachfully,

"O Billy! is that your idea of Christian warfare? Don't you remember that we are told not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good?"

But Billy, nowise daunted, declared that he might have to lick Sam Low. He shouldn't pick a fight, he said—he'd try hard not to have one—but if Sam would have a licking, why he'd get it, that was all. A good licking was good for a bully, he said. To give up, and let a fellow think he'd cowed you, was the evil. That was being overcome of evil, sure enough.

Mrs. Lyste shook her head and smiled. "I must commend what I can," she said. "Billy starts out with a set purpose and a fixed aim—to get Sam into the Sunday-school. 'This one thing I do,' he says. I have great faith in the success of any one who begins a work with a certain fixed purpose. 'Know thy work and do it,' is a brave charge. But seek also the very best way of doing it, is a wise caution. The force of a patient endeavor, a hearty good-will and an honest desire to benefit is, I believe, more effectual than any mere physical force. It is better, too, to lead than to drive. Remember that."

"But some cattle have to be driven, or they'd never be got into the pasture," said Rob. "Billy is level there. Boys don't manage with boys as old folks do. They can't. 'Tother boys won't take it off 'em."

Evidently these boys held theories. Mrs. Lyste concluded to let them put them into practice after their own fashion. "Only remember," she said, "it is Christ's work that we are doing, and we must strive to do it in the Christ-spirit."

Then, opening the piano, she began a lively marching tune, and invited the boys to file out to the dining-room, keeping step to the music. In the dining-room a merry time awaited them, and the oysters and coffee were hugely enjoyed.

The three months were ended. Not an opal-cross had found its way again into the rose-lined casket. The water drops still gathered and emitted light. And "Our Union" had increased by four members, Sam Low being one of them. By a unanimous vote the bond and pledge were renewed for a year. Every week Mrs. Lyste gave one evening to the entertainment of the boys, and the experiences of the members of the Union, in their weekly work for the Master, as eagerly told in those parlors, had become a most delightful feature of the evening's entertainment. Unconsciously the boys were becoming trained workers for the church. The results of their labors among the B—Street boys were manifest. The soda and beer stand no longer held sway on the vacant lot. Three of the Sunday players were brought into and kept in the Sunday-school. And the work was nowise abated. One victory only encouraged the hope of another, and the weekly evenings kept the flame of zeal aglow.

After one month's attendance the recruits from the B—Street ground were surprised by an announcement made by the teacher to her class.

"On next Thursday," said that delightful woman to her boys, "we are to have a picnic in Pond Grove. The boats and the pond are to be at our service and we are to roam the woods and fish and swim, if we care to, at will. We shall make a day of it. And I ask you all to help me make a red-letter day of it for our Union. Let us be fishers of men—or rather of boys. Each one of you is invited and expected to bring with you one other boy, whom you know, who does not go to Sunday-school, and who needs to be helped. There will be a chance for a good time for him and plenty of fun. All that is asked of him is that he will be on his good behaviour for that day, and that he will come to our class on the next Sunday."

"Oh, jolly!" said Willie Davis. "I'll get Harry Hale in on that. He loves to fish better'n any fellow I know. How are we to go?"

"I have engaged two farm-waggons," said Mrs. Lyste. "We shall leave the city at eight o'clock in the morning, spend the day in the woods, taking our supper of coffee and fish—that you boys are to catch—in the grove, and return by moonlight, sufficiently tired and delighted, I hope. I trust we may

do a good work for the Master on this gala-day."

"I tell you what, she knows how to do it," was the emphatic comment of one of the new recruits, as the lads lingered on the corner curbstone that afternoon to talk over the delightful anticipation. "If it wa'n't that Tim Ryan's folks were Catholics, I'd 'a' got him to join Sunday-school before this. He wants to come. Says he'd take the pledge, too. Says we boys are bound to be somebody, and he'd like to stand a chance too. But the priest won't let him come."

"That's it," said Willie Schuyler. "Mrs. Lyste says the rich and the Catholics are the hardest ones to reach."

"Well, but we can reach them," said Willie Davis. "Harry Hale is rich, and I've reached him. His folks are dead set against churches too—don't believe in religion, and let Harry do as he pleases on Sunday and other days. But I've told Harry about our jolly times up at M. Lyste's, and about our class, and he'd pretty near made up his mind to come to Sunday-school with me last week. This picnic will fetch him. And I shouldn't wonder if Tim would dare to come just for once; and if he does, you know Mrs. Lyste will teach him things out of the Bible that will set him to thinking for himself, and 'twon't be long before he'll find out that it's worth while to do his own thinking. Oh, try him again, Sam. Tell him we all respect the sign," and Willie pointed to the opal cross, for all the new recruits wore crosses too. And it came to pass that Tim Ryan was won.

And so the good work went on. The heaven loosened. Those dreadful boys somewhat, imperceptibly, yet surely, lost their identity as the months wore on, and the class enlarged until the front slips would no longer hold them and the superintendent was forced to assign to them the entire corner-five slips. The Corner Class it was called thereafter, and for years. Its record is a shining one. I heard of it only last winter—of its original seven, I mean. One here, one there, one yonder, but all doing the same Christian work; each one an earnest, active temperance man, a Sunday-school worker, and a prosperous member of the society in which his lot is cast.

And as Mrs. Lyste hears now and again of and from some of the many boys who have gone out into the world of labor and conflict from the Corner Class, she recalls sometimes the struggles that she had with self through all the years that she so conscientiously denied herself in order to provide the means by which she wreathed with the pure flowers of pleasure the loving suares which she set for her boys, and by which she made her hold on them not irksome, yet secure. She remembers sometimes the satin gown she put aside, that she might use the price of it in a winter's evening for the class. She remembers the new carpets that went to the fitting up of a neat coffee room, that her boys—those dreadful boys—set going, and that grew into a powerful agency for the prevention of the spread of alcoholism in a certain district. And she thinks sometimes of a winter's tour in semi-tropic lands foregone for the sake of a mission Sunday-school started by those same boys, years later, in a destitute and well-nigh hopeless neighborhood, and of all the continuous small economies forced upon her by the increasing opportunities of spending and being spent for the cause she loved; yet recalls these only that she may smile to think of the contrast between the views of now and then as to the value of the foregone pleasures. How dear the cost seemed then, and how insignificant it now appears in view of the gain accomplished! And happy tears oft dim her eyes as she thus reviews her loving efforts, surely, surely not in vain for those dreadful boys.—*Christian Weekly.*

A LETTER FROM INDIA

Last week we gave an account of a mission circle which is working in connection with the Ladies' Society in one of our churches. This week we are permitted to copy a letter that was received some time ago by "The Little Helpers." Perhaps some of the young folks who read it will wish to form mission circles of their own in order to help in the good work of sending the Gospel to far-off lands.

VELLORE, March 8th, 1884.

MY DEAR CHILDREN: I am going to try to tell you something of our boarding-school in which Mr. Pakiamadhan is one

of the teachers. Mrs. G. informs me that you intend to help support him, and perhaps you will like to shorten his name as we do and call him Mr. Pakium.

Our school is in many respects very different from any that you have attended. It is composed entirely of black or colored girls, but they do not resemble negroes, as they have nice, straight, long black hair. Negro girls have flat noses and thick lips but our girls have often pretty noses and mouths, and beautiful teeth. The last they get by cleaning them with charcoal. They never need to be reminded to clean them, as so many children in America do, because these little people are brought up from infancy to look upon keeping the mouth clean as a very important thing, which must never be forgotten. Tooth-brushes are not the fashion here, but the end of the forefinger or a bit of soft stick is a very good substitute. They do not use a hairbrush either, but a wooden comb. They put cocconut oil on the hair, and that makes it very glossy.

Their dress is also quite different from yours. They wear a very small colored jacket with short sleeves, a colored petticoat, and over that a long strip of calico or muslin laid over one shoulder, one end falling in front like an apron. The other end is brought from the back around the waist and back again, where it falls like a broad sash behind. It can be made to look very pretty.

They have no shoes or stockings, no hats or bonnets, but when they go to church they lose this strip of cloth and put it over the head. The big girls have a large cloth which is made to form the whole dress, and is very graceful when well put on. It can be very costly. I saw a rich native lady with one on that cost seventy-five dollars, but those that our girls wear cost from two to four dollars, or even less.

In this seminary we have at present fifty-four girls, divided into four classes, and varying in age from nine to sixteen. They have good memories and can repeat many verses in the Bible, the Heidelberg Catechism, and other books. They like to sing and know many of their own native songs or hymns, which are not at all like yours.

They, however, play some games very like those that children play in America, especially the running games, and they count out the girls with a funny sounding verse, just as I remember to have done when a little girl. You will be surprised to hear that these children have to eat. About seven o'clock in the morning, after they have swept the building and taken a bath themselves, they each have a rice cake and some gruel. At twelve they each have a large soup-plate full of boiled rice, meat and vegetables made into a curry. Curry is made of spices, red peppers, onions, tamarinds, and some kinds of seed. All these ingredients are rolled on a large stone until very fine, and then by the addition of water made into a paste. The meat and vegetables are chopped and stewed with this paste, and then each child has some poured over her dish of rice. In the evening at seven o'clock they have another dish of rice and curry without meat, and a different kind of vegetable. On Sunday night they have salt fish to eat with their curry, and occasionally they have pickles and bananas.

These children all give something to the Lord, but this they do in a different way from most children at home. They are entitled to two rice cakes apiece every morning, but they give up one in order that they may have something to put into the plate at church, and to help in giving the Scriptures to other heathen children. This giving up a part of their early breakfast is quite an act of self denial, for, as you may imagine, they must get very hungry before twelve o'clock.

They are taught to do very pretty crochet work, and they like it better than sewing. However, they are all obliged to learn a little plain work, and also to cook their own food, but as they have not much variety in their meals, this last is not very difficult.

When you pray to God ask Him to bless Mrs. Scudder and her schools at Vellore.

Yours affectionately,
Mrs. J. W. SCUDDER.
—*Christian Intelligencer.*

TO REMOVE remnants of old oil-cloth from floor apply a very hot flat iron which will soften it, so it can be scraped off.