

A lady no longer young, and yet not very old, writes from Michigan. "I feel again, in old age, the consciousness of mental and spiritual growth. To be brought into such close fellowship with the best workers and thinkers of the age is a rich blessing. I have enjoyed the course increasingly, and am proposing to take the White Seal Course with my class. If you had not devised it, I should have enlisted over again with the class of '86."

We have received several letters of similar tenor to that below, and would be glad to receive many more:

DEAR SIR,—I am a constant reader of your splendid little paper, "Pleasant Hours," and I like it very much indeed. I saw the announcement of C. L. S. C. and it struck me as being just what I required. I had to leave school when I was young, and I often have cause to regret it. I would like very much to join this circle. Would you please send me a circular with full instructions? I have a "chum" who would like to join it too.

REQUIRED READING, S. S. R. U.

STORIES FROM CANADIAN HISTORY.

BY THE EDITOR.*

HEART TRIALS.



ELL, Kate," said Zenas, as he and his sister rode homeward through the solemn moonlight and starlight, "You have burned your boats and broken down the bridge. There is no

going back."

"I hope not Zenas," she replied, but I feel very much need of going forward. I have only made the first step yet."

"Well, you've started on the right line, anyhow. It was a plucky thing to do. I did not think it was in you. You are naturally so shy. I wish I could do so myself, but I haven't the courage."

"Don't think of yourself, Zenas, nor of your comrades; but of the loving Saviour who died for you and longs to save you."

"Upon my word, Kate, it made me feel more what a coward I am to see you standing before the whole meeting than all the preaching I ever heard."

"I felt that I ought, that I must," said Kate, "but after I rose I forgot every one there and spoke because my heart was full. O Zenas, just give up everything for Jesus; be willing to endure anything for Jesus; and you'll feel a joy and a gladness you never felt before. Why, the very world seems changed, the stars and the trees, and the moonlight on the river were never so beautiful; and my heart is as light as a bird."

"I wish I could, Kate. I remember I used to feel something like that about Brock. I could follow him anywhere. I could have died for him."

"Well, that feeling is ennobling. But much nobler is it to enlist under the Great Captain, the grandest

teacher and leader the world ever knew, and what is better far, the most loving Saviour and Friend."

With such loving converse, the brother and sister beguiled the homeward way. As Kate retired to her room a sweet peace flooded her soul as the moonlight flooded with a heavenly radiance the snowy world without. Zenas, on the contrary, was ill at ease, and tossed restlessly, his soul disturbed with deep questionings of the hereafter, during much of the night.

As Kate sat at the head of the table next morning, where her brother had been wont to sit, some of her dead mother's holy calm and peace seemed to rest upon her countenance. So thought her father as he looked upon her.

"How like your mother you grow, child," he said when all the rest had left the table.

"Do I, father? I hope I shall grow like her in everything. I have learned the secret of her noble life. I have found her best friend," and she modestly recounted her recent experiences.

Little more than passed, but a few days afterwards, the Squire took occasion, when he was alone with his daughter, to say, "I hope you are not going to join those Methodists, Kate. I respect religion as much as any one; but I think the Church of your father ought to be good enough for you. You've always been a good girl. I don't see the need of this fuss, as if you had been doing something awful. Besides," he went on, a little hesitatingly, as if he were not quite sure of his ground, "besides it will mar your prospects in life, if you only knew it."

"I don't understand you, father," replied Kate, with an expression of perplexity. "You have always thought too well of me. I know my life has been very far from right in the eyes of God. I feel I need pardon as the worst of sinners."

"Of course we're all sinners," went on the old man. "The Prayer Book says that. But then Christ died to save sinners, you know; and I'm sure you never did anything very bad. But what I mean is this: You must be aware that you have made a deep impression upon Captain Villiers, and no blame to him either. He is an honourable gentleman, and he has asked my permission to pay his addresses. I asked him to wait till this cruel war is over, because while it lasts a soldier's life is very uncertain, and I did not wish to harrow up your feelings by cultivating affections which might be blighted in their bloom. Nay, hear me out, child," he continued, as Kate was about to reply, "I did not intend to speak of this now, but the Captain is a strict Churchman, and so were his ancestors, he says for three hundred years, and he would not, I am sure, like one for whom he entertains such sentiments as he does toward you, to cast in her lot with those ranting Methodists."

Kate had at first blushed deeply, and then grew very pale. She however listened to her father patiently, and then said quietly, but with much firmness, "I respect Captain Villiers very highly, father; and am very grateful for his kindness to us all, and especially to Zenas when he was wounded. I feel,

too, the honour that he has done me in entertaining the sentiments of which you speak. But something more than respect is due to the man to whom I shall entrust my life's keeping. Where my heart goes, there will go my hand; there, and not elsewhere."

"Pooh! pooh, child. Girls are always romantic, and never know their own mind. You will think better of it. I'm getting to be an old man, and would not like to leave you unsettled in these troublesome times. You owe me your obedience as a daughter, remember."

"I owe you my love, my life, but I owe something to myself, and more to God. I feel that my taste and disposition and that of Captain Villiers are very different, and more different than ever since the recent change in my religious feelings. It would be at the peril of my soul, were I to encourage what you wish."

"Nonsense, girl. You are growing fanatical. You never disobeyed me before. You must not disobey me now."

Kate smiled a wan and flickering smile of dissent; but to say more she felt would be fruitless. A heavy burden was laid upon her young life. She knew the iron will that slumbered beneath her father's kind exterior; but she felt in her soul a will as resolute, and with a woman's queenly dignity she resolved to keep that soul-realm free. In her outward conduct she was more dutiful and attentive to her father's comfort than ever, but she felt poignantly for the first time in her life an injunction was laid upon her by one who she so passionately loved which she could not obey. She found much comfort in softly singing to herself in that inviolate domain, the solitude of her own room, a recent poem which she had clipped from the *York Gazette*, and which in part, expressed her own emotions:—

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be;
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought and hoped and known,
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own!

"And while Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may shun me
Show Thy face and all is bright.
Go, then, earthly fame and treasure!
Come disaster, scorn, and pain!
In thy service, pain is pleasure;
With Thy favour, loss is gain.

"Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
O 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While Thy love is left to me,
O 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee."

THE MILKMAIDS OF DORT.

GIrls often declare that the boys have all the fun. Well, they certainly do seem to get the larger share of it in a good many ways. Then, when they grow up, they are very apt, too, to carry off all the honours, the literary fame, the military glory, the professional success, while the girls are left at home to do worsted-work.

Now and then, however, the girls come to the front in art, in literature, in science, and even in war.

If any of you ever go to Holland, the land of wooden dikes and wind-mills, it is quite possible that you may

find yourselves some day in the ancient town of Dort, or Dordrecht. It is a grand old city. Here among these antiquated buildings, with their queer gables and great iron cranes, many an interesting historical event has taken place.

In the centre of the great market-place of Dort stands a fountain, and if you will look close you will see upon the tall pyramid a *relievo* representing a cow, and underneath, in sitting posture, a milkmaid. They are there to commemorate the following historical fact:

When the provinces of the United Netherlands were struggling for their liberty, two beautiful daughters of a rich farmer, on their way to town with milk, observed not far from their path several Spanish soldiers concealed behind some hedges. The patriotic maidens pretending not to have seen anything, pursued their journey, and as soon as they arrived in the city insisted upon an admission to the burgo-master, who had not yet left his bed. They were admitted, and related what they had discovered. The news was spread about. Not a moment was lost. The council was assembled; measures were immediately taken; the sluices were opened, and a number of the enemy lost their lives in the water. Thus the inhabitants were saved from an awful doom.

The magistrates in a body honoured the farmer with a visit, where they thanked his daughters for the act of patriotism which saved the town. They afterward indemnified him fully for the loss he sustained from the inundation, and the most distinguished young citizens vied with each other who should be honoured with the hands of the milkmaids. Then as the years went by, the fountain was erected, and the story commemorated in stone.—*Harper's Young People.*

GATHERING HOMEWARD.

THEY'RE gathering homeward from every land
One by one, one by one;
As their weary feet touch the shining strand,
Yes, one by one.
Their brows are enclosed in a golden crown,
Their travel-stained garments are all laid down
And clothed in white raiment they rest in the mead,
Where the Lamb doth love His saints to lead.

Before they rest they pass through the strife,
One by one, one by one,
Through the waters of death they enter life
Yes, one by one.
To some are the floods of the river still.
As they ford on their way to that heavenly hill,
To others the waves run fiercely and wild,
Yet they reach the home of the undefiled.

We, too, shall come to the river side,
One by one, one by one;
We are nearer its waters each eventide.
Yes, one by one.
We can hear the noise and the dash of the stream,
Now and again, through our life's deepest dream;
Sometimes the floods all the banks overflow,
Sometimes in ripples and small waves go.

Jesus, Redeemer, we look to Thee
One by one, one by one;
We lift our voices tremblingly,
Yes, one by one.
The waves of the river are dark and cold,
We know not the place where our feet may hold;
Thou who didst pass through that dark midnight,
Strengthen us, send to us the staff and the light.

* This sketch is taken from a volume by the Editor, entitled "Neville Trueman, the Pioneer Preacher; a Story of the War of 1812," pp. 244, price 75 cents. Wm. Briggs, Toronto, Publisher.