

With the Juniors

Mabel Watson's First Junior Meeting.

By Vida Alden.

MABEL WATSON was on a visit to her friend Tessie Wilson. From the time of her arrival Mabel had seen and felt a new element in Tessie's character—an element that drew out her love for her more strongly than ever. Thus it was that Tessie gained Mabel's consent to attend the Christian Endeavor Mission Band that afternoon, though she declared she knew it would be "a dull, pokey old time of it!"

The Juniors held their weekly meetings in the pleasant sitting-room of their superintendent, Mrs. Mayne, who believed that being near together, and seeing each other's faces, went far towards making a good, hearty meeting. She was always ready with a kind smile and a warm handshake to welcome each Junior, and gladly greeted Mabel with Tessie.

Mabel's eyes were wide open to see what could make Tessie so delight in Junior meetings. She saw a number of children, most of them younger than Tessie and herself, gathering with bright, expectant faces, and eyes shining with happiness, leaving hats and books—for school was just "let out"—in the hall as they entered. While they were coming in, a bright, well-known hymn was sung, thus preparing their thoughts for the meeting by preventing chatting.

Imagine Mabel's surprise when, promptly at the time appointed, a little girl of eleven years, who sat beside Mrs. Mayne, rose and said, "We will begin our meeting by singing No. 3, 'I am so glad.'" A child leading a meeting! And Mrs. Mayne there, too! She was still more surprised, however, when, after the hymn was sung, Winnie said, "Let us pray," and they all knelt while she asked God to "please bless us all here in this meeting, and may we all get some good here; and bless all the members that could not come to-day; and help us to keep our pledge better this week than we did last week; for Jesus' sake, amen."

Mabel had never heard a child pray before others, except "saying prayers," and she wondered how Winnie could do it. There was little danger of her finding the meeting "dull and pokey."

Winnie then read from her programme, "We will sing the two first verses of No. 374, 'My Jesus, I love thee,'" and the ringing gladness of the fresh young voices showed they meant what they sang.

"We will now have our Bible acrostics," said Winnie. A child arose and said, "Ask, and ye shall receive, Matt. 7:7; My son, give me thine heart, Prov. 22:26; Yea, the Lord will give that which is good, Psalm 85:12." She was followed by the others, with part or whole acrostics upon their names.

Mrs. Mayne, glancing at Winnie's programme, now spoke. "If we could see Jesus," said she, "as His disciples did in the long-ago times, I wonder what we would say to Him this afternoon? What would we thank Him for? What would we ask Him to give us? What faults and sins would we tell Him about and ask Him to forgive?" When she had received answers to each question, she said, "Well, we know He is here as really as the air is here; and we want to pray our thanks and wants and sins to Him. Different ones would like to speak to Him about different things. He is lovingly waiting to hear us now."

Winnie asked, "Will two or three please offer prayer." Again all knelt. Mabel was startled as Tessie's voice, close beside her, at once led in thanksgiving. Somehow, that prayer made her feel as if Tessie were so close to Jesus, speaking to Him with a heart full of loving trust, while she herself was left outside alone. And with that feeling came a great longing to have Him for her own friend and Saviour. She had been well taught in Bible truth, and knew her need; and had decided that sometime she would become a Christian. But there was greater intensity in the present desire than ever before. The Holy Spirit was moving upon her heart. Would she yield to Him?

After Tessie others prayed, confessing, "We have done a great many wrong things; we have had bad thoughts in our hearts, and we have said cross words, and we haven't always told all the truth; we were often selfish and kept the best for ourselves, and we forgot to do what we promised. O Lord, please to make our hearts clean, and forgive us all our sins for Jesus' sake." "We didn't do the best we could, and we got angry when folks teased us, and we didn't mind our mothers cheerfully, and O Lord, please to help us not to get cross, and, and amen." "O Lord, take care of us, and bless the poor Armenians, and make the wicked people not hurt them any more, and take care of the missionaries, and don't let them get discouraged, and make the heathens learn to love Thee, and make me good and make me a missionary sometime."

After the prayers, Winnie asked, "Who has a hymn?" Two hands were raised. "Well, Fay?" "Jesus bids us shine," replied Fay.

"We will next have the slips read. Fanny, please begin."

Fanny read from her paper: "Saturday, I read about Joseph, cried out loud when his brothers were there; Sunday, read the 23rd Psalm; Tuesday, about Paul let down in a basket out of a window and got safe away from some wicked folks that wanted to kill him; Wednesday, I forgot to write it down; Thursday, about Peter seeing a great sheet full of live things come down from heaven; to-day, was about a woman that asked Jesus for some water."