

'You know what Louisa Alcott once said, Constance? "That the most elegant manners are the kindest." And it's true, little daughter. You must remember one thing, too. God loves to have us humble. We are all the same in his sight, rich and poor, high and low, obscure or famous. The same kind Hand is leading all of us. "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." It's worth striving for, isn't it, dear child?'

'Indeed it is,' replied Constance, with her heart in her voice.

Sowing

(Mary Joslin Smith, in 'Christian Intelligencer'.)

'Mary, see here; I have brought you a little girl!'

At the sound of her husband's voice, Mary stepped from the room where she was putting her boys to bed, to the head of the stairs and looked down to the lower hall.

Her husband had come on an earlier train than she expected, and let himself in with his latch-key.

Where has he picked up that object? was her thought, as she went down to welcome him and see the child. It would not have required a great stretch of imagination to think she belonged to some wild tribe. Her hair hung down to her shoulders and into her eyes, she wore dark cotton coarse clothing, and the lunch she had in her basket was as coarse.

'Show your card to Mrs. Morgan,' said the colonel, and the child took from her basket a pasteboard marked with her name and destination; it had a string attachment so it could be hung about her neck. Mary learned that the child had been put upon the train back at one of the country stations, her fare paid and she tagged for a place in the lumber district in Michigan. It was Saturday night, and both the conductor and Col. Morgan knew that even if the child went on to Detroit, there she would have to stay over, for no trains run on Sunday out to the nearest station to the child's home. Col. Morgan telegraphed to the station agent that the child was safe, and brought her home to stay until the late afternoon train left on Sunday, so she could take an early Monday morning train home.

Esther was eight years old, and she told Mrs. Morgan that she had a stepfather who did not like her, and she had been sent to her grandmother's. 'But they are poor, and could not keep me any longer,' she added, sadly.

Everything was so strange to the child in that home. 'It is just like a dream, isn't it?' she kept saying. 'Doesn't anybody get cross here?' she asked.

Mrs. Morgan put one of her boy's nightgowns on the child as she prepared to put her to bed. 'I never have these at home,' she said.

'Do you pray to God at night,' asked Mrs. Morgan.

'Why, no; I don't know how. Could you tell me?'

What Mrs. Morgan told her seemed to be received in childlike faith, and she said, 'I will pray after this.'

When she got into bed she rocked herself on the springs, then jumped out of bed to look under and see what made it like a cradle.

'I never saw anything but cords for a bed before,' she said; then creeping back,

hummed herself to sleep rocking the springs.

On the morrow it was a serious problem whether to take the child to church. Col. Morgan's love for children, his study of their nature and needs seemed always to keep him very near the kingdom of Heaven. He begged of his wife to fix the child up some way, and let her go and hear the music and see inside a church and Sunday-school.

Mrs. Morgan was the superintendent of the primary department of the school connected with her church. The children were well dressed and well trained, but she felt sure they could not help laughing at Esther. However, she fixed her up the best she could, and Esther went with the family.

At the sound of the organ she asked out loud, 'Where does that big noise come from?' When the minister began to pray, she asked: 'Is he talking to God as you told me last night?'

But the Sunday-school delighted Esther most of all. Her dark, homely little face was aglow with interest.

At the close of the school she said to Mrs. Morgan: 'Will you give me all the papers and tickets you can spare? When I get home I know I can start a Sunday-school.'

'Yes, Esther, I will,' replied Mrs. Morgan. 'But can you teach a school?'

'No, but I know a pretty lady two miles from my house that came there from some city; I guess she will know how. I can get her a class of boys and girls, I am sure; not large, like yours, but we can have a good time.'

Sure enough, from that one Sunday's visit in that school little Esther had enthusiasm enough kindled within her to really start a Sunday-class, and the founding of a list of prosperous schools in that lumber country can be traced back to that child's visit, which seemed the merest chance.

Years afterward, Mrs. Morgan said:—'What if I had stayed at home with the child that Sunday, or left her with the servant, as I was tempted to do?'

'In the morning sow the seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.'

The Adventure of a Toad.

(Marion Winfield Hissey, in 'New York Observer'.)

One summer afternoon Vandalia, Eleanor and Walter were walking in the park. Walter saw a toad hopping across the gravel walk, and disappear in the grass.

'Vandalia,' cried Walter, 'look at the toad.' Vandalia and Eleanor came up to where Walter stood and looked at the toad sitting in the grass, contented and happy. And old man passing the children, heard their conversation about the toad, paused, and said:

'Children, let us have some fun with Brother Toad.' With his cane in his hands and getting down on his knees, he slowly pushed the cane through the grass, in the direction of the toad's head, making the grass move as though a snake was crawling through it. The toad all this time sat dignified and stately as a king, not a smile on his homely face, now and then his eyes

blinking, he looked the image of joy, unclouded by sorrow.

As the cane came slowly through the grass, its polished surface glistening in the sunlight, the toad caught sight of it—a wonderful change came over him—his dignity failed—he suddenly gave a high leap into the air, and fell down in the grass with a thud, and then began a series of jumps, and leaps, like a rabbit makes when the hound chases him, and the toad continued these jumps until he passed out of view, down a hill.

Walter yelled with delight, crying, 'Go it, toady.' Vandalia laughed until tears came into her eyes, and said: 'Toady thinks it is a snake.' Eleanor looked at the toad hopping away from its supposed danger, and said, in a voice of pity, 'Poor little toad, it is too bad to scare you.'

When the toad reached its home under the rocks, worn out by its long run for life, he told a great story to the other toads of the family, about the snake coming through the grass, and how he hopped away so fast that the snake could not catch him, and the other toads all looked upon him as a hero.

There is many a man going about with a wonderful reputation for bravery, whose bravery, like that of the toad's, rest solely upon a danger that never existed.

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