

one of those docked tails and let him go jogging along at a granny gait on an asphalt pavement or in the park—call that riding?—pooh! and Jack ended with a snort of contempt!

Within the house the two girls, Lucy and Patty, were also discussing their cousin. Lucy, with her blue calico sleeves rolled up high above her rosy, dimpled elbows, was sifting flour for tea biscuits.

'It's a shame,' she exclaimed, with an emphatic pat on the sieve, 'a shame that the boys should act so! The way they treat Ted, I mean!'

'But how funny he did look tumbling over Wildfire's head!' giggled Patty, who was far younger and giddier.

'Might have broken his neck! Wish I'd hinted to him how tricky Indian ponies are.'

'The boys would have been mad if you had!'

'Let 'em!' with the superior air of an elder sister. 'Anyhow, it's very shabby for them to treat a stranger so—an orphan, too.'

'But he is such a "tender-foot"!'

'He isn't the fool they think him, though! He's a splendid scholar. Jack and Jerry might be thankful if they knew half what he does! He can read Latin right off, and you ought to have heard him chatter French with Louis, the old Manitoba trapper! He can do any example in the arithmetic, too. Told father just as quick how many bushels the new root-cellar would hold. Then nobody can say he isn't mannerly. I should have thought that our Jerry would have been ashamed last evening when he planked himself down in the big rocking-chair and father came in all tired out, for it was Ted who jumped up and got him a chair and took his hat and coat.'

'He is polite,' Patty admitted. 'But, you see, the boys'll never give in, because he can't ride a penny that "bucks" and he's so green about Western ways; he thinks the Indians are poor, abused creatures; he's awfully interested in them; then he potters about on the prairie and gathers flowers and collects specimens, and looks scared and disgusted when the cowboys swear. Then that Sunday-school scheme'—

'Yes, that Sunday-school scheme,' Lucy interrupted. 'I'm inclined to think it a good one. Since Ted's been here I've done considerable thinking and I've come to the conclusion that we live just like heathen. If mother'd lived'—with a tremble in her voice—'perhaps it wouldn't have been so. I remember how she used to tell about Sundays in the East and church and Sunday-school. But here we are, miles from any church, and what are we to do? Ted's idea is to have some of the young folks on the "quarter-sections" around us gather at some place and have a little Sunday-school. There are at least a dozen who could come if only Jack and Jerry would invite them and take an interest in the plan. But whenever Ted talks about it they grin like Cheshire cats and call him "Granny" and "Miss Nancy" and "Deacon" and all that! I just wish the boy could prove to them that he wasn't the mollicoddle they think him!' and Lucy gave an emphatic bang to the oven door as she slid in her pan of biscuits.

The golden light faded from the western sky and the prairie was spread with ebony shadows. The mellow air of the March afternoon grew suddenly chill. There was no danger of frost, however. The sudden spring mildness of the past few days had accomplished a good deal. Mr. Barrow's face was somewhat grave as he drove in from town. 'Folks are worrying about the Missouri breaking up,' he said, as he sat down to the bountiful supper table.

'Do they think it'll break up right away, pa?' said Lucy, anxiously.

'Yes. If it only doesn't dam up down at Sibley's Island as it did five years ago. We had bad work then! I lost nigh to two hundred sheep then and I don't know how many bushels of wheat.'

Ted was listening to the conversation and his face grew serious, seeing which Jack poked Jerry playfully in the ribs, exclaiming, in a sepulchral whisper, 'Granny's afraid he'll get his best Sunday cap and his knittin'-work and Latin grammar wet!' Ted flushed and Lucy bestowed what she intended to be a particularly dreadful frown upon her elder brother.

At half-past nine that night Mr. Barrows opened the back door and looked out. 'Feels colder,' he said. 'Guess it's going to freeze up, after all,' and he and his family retired, feeling that all would be well.

It was Ted who woke up in the small hours after midnight, hearing a sullen, roaring sound like that of an approaching tempest. He just crawled to the foot of his bed, drew aside the window curtain and looked out. There was no storm brewing, but as Ted looked afar on the prairie his eyes caught a gleam of something besides moonlight. Away where a purple-black fringe of cottonwoods and willows marked the course of the Missouri was a steadily widening silvery streak. Nearer by, little gleams came from the sodden grass around the ranch buildings where stood deepening puddles of water. Above the roar of the flood was heard the creaking and grinding of huge cakes of ice hurled along by the torrent. The Missouri had broken!

Ted awakened the family and, a few minutes later, a pale, trembling group assembled at the window, staring out upon the moonlit waters. Now that the trouble had really come, Mr. Barrows did his best to reassure his dear ones. 'Do not be alarmed,' he said, 'at the worst, it means only a loss of dollars to us. Fortunately, the stock are out on the range, and they will know enough to seek the protection of the bluffs where the water cannot reach them.'

'Hadh't we better go there, too?' said Lucy, tearfully.

Her father looked at the two feet of water surrounding the ranch. 'No,' he said, hesitatingly, 'it will only be exposing ourselves to unnecessary cold and wet. The water won't rise much higher; it didn't five years ago, anyhow.' Nevertheless, his face grew more gloomy as he watched the black, swirling flood.

'I wish we had a boat!' said Jack, uneasily. 'If I had only thought! There's the Josephine tied down by the creek. If she were here, she'd be big enough to hold us all!'

'Gather up the things that you value most and we will go up in the loft,' said Mr. Barrows, soberly. 'We'll keep together, whatever happens. I wish, though, we had run for the bluffs while there was time,' he added, in a moody undertone.

'Why, where's Ted?' suddenly exclaimed Patty, as the family filed up the narrow stairs.

'He was here a few minutes ago,' said Lucy.

But Ted was certainly missing. With startled, white faces, the members of the family looked at one another. 'He was looking out of the back window, the last that I saw him,' said Jerry, solemnly.

Could the boy have fallen out? Down stairs they trooped and leaned over the window-ledge, regardless of the rising waters. Floating timbers, tangled shrubs, wisps of hay, swimming animals—all swept by in panoramic succession, but no Ted was to be seen! Suddenly, while they waited, weeping, they heard above the roar of the waters a clear, joyous

shout, and around the corner of the house swept a long, dark object.

It was a boat, and the moonlight streaming down revealed the name 'Josephine' upon the bow. Seated therein and pulling with the lusty vigor of a member of a college crew was 'tender-foot Ted.'

'I waded down, Uncle Tom—and swam part of the way—and got her!' he shouted. 'She leaked some, but I plugged up the crack with my vest. Climb in, now. Keep up good courage, and, please God, we'll get soon to dry land.'

And so they did, thanks to God's mercy and the lad's bravery. By the time the bluffs were reached the ranch building had loosened from its foundation and was floated giddily along the flood. But by this time the waters had reached their height, and a few hours later began rapidly to subside. No lives of human beings were lost, but the memory of that terrible night will linger long with the dwellers on the prairie. Never again was Ted called a 'tender-foot.' Never again was he accused of cowardice. And when, some weeks later, after the house was secured again to its foundations and rendered fit for occupancy, and everybody had settled down to the comfortable routine of old, Ted broached the cherished plan of organizing a Sunday-school, he was listened to with respectful attention, and Jack and Jerry said with one accord, 'Yes, sir—ee! We'll lend a hand! That night of the "Missouri's break-up" made a feller think some pretty solemn thoughts!'

### A New Page.

God gives us a clear page for the opening of each day, and markedly so with the beginning of each year. Let us not spend too much time sighing over lost opportunities; so doing we may miss present advantages. Long ago we were taught that water spilled upon the ground cannot be gathered up again, and if it could it would not be drinkable. God puts a fresh cup of pure water to our lips day by day and year by year. Let us pass over the line into the new year with malice toward none, with charity toward all, with true patriotism toward our own country, and with love toward all men as we would have them love us, at the same time with supreme love to God, the Giver of all good gifts.—Robert S. MacArthur, D.D.

Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas  
Star and angels gave the sign.

Love shall be our token,  
Love be yours, and love be mine,  
Love to God and all men,  
Love the universal sign.

—C. G. Rossetti.

### Conscience Awakened by the Bible.

A little girl, who lived on the slope of a great smoky mountain, was trudging home with a Bible which her Sunday-school teacher had given her. She was afraid to take it to her home for fear that her grandfather would not let her keep it; for he was a rough, wicked man. She knelt down by the side of the road and prayed: 'Dear God, please make my grandpa to love the Bible and be a good man; and let me keep it. And bless the little girl up North, for Jesus' sake, Amen.' The Bible had been sent to her by a little girl from the North.

She showed it to her mother, who said, 'Yes, child; I am glad you have something to make you happy.' When she showed it to her grand-