

### A Suggestion from Dennis.

WHEN Dennis mentioned the matter for the first time I was almost indignant. We were sitting at the fireside one evening. He had been reading the paper, and I was almost dozing over a dull book, when he looked up quite suddenly and said: "I have been thinking, Clara, that you and I should begin giving systematically."

"Giving systematically to what?" I asked in genuine surprise, and endeavored to look wide-awake and interested.

"Why, to the Church and missions, and so on," explained Dennis.

"Give what?" I asked again, setting my lips a trifle firmer, and making it just as hard for poor Dennis as I could.

"Money, of course," he answered. "You know what I mean, dear. Suppose we keep a tithe-box. At present we really give nothing worth speaking of."

"Whatever are you thinking of, Dennis," said I, "to talk so soberly of giving, when you know we have not nearly enough to live on as it is? It is more of a problem every day, with our income, to make ends meet."

I looked meaningly around the plain, little room, with its modest, lonely looking furniture, and reminded Dennis of the rent which was overdue, and the many things we both needed. I even quoted Scripture to the effect that if a man provide not for his own he is worse than an infidel; and, being fairly started, soon talked both him and myself into a very dissatisfied frame of mind. It all ended in Dennis saying: "Oh, well! no doubt, as you say, what is impossible is impossible, and that ends it. But I do wish we were able to give something."

A serious illness came to me, and as I needed constant care, Dennis, who was very busy in the office, proposed that we send for a young girl, whom we had become interested in as a child in the Orphans' Home. I knew she had experience in attending the sick, and rather unwillingly consented. Maggie was a capable, well-trained girl, and had a peculiarly gentle and pleasing voice. I loved to hear it so well, that during my convalescence I kept her talking on one pretext or other most of the time. In this spirit I asked her rather languidly one day what she kept in a little paste-board box I had several times noticed in her hands.

"This is my tithe-box," said Maggie, turning her honest, blue eyes full on me. "I was just counting the money over, to see how much I have for the missions next Sabbath."

"Why, child," said I, "come here and sit by me; I want to talk to you. Do you mean to tell me that you give a tenth to the Lord?"

The girl was rather surprised at my vehemence, but she answered simply: "Why, yes, ma'am. I am very sorry it is so little I can give, having only my earnings. Sometimes I think it would be nearer right if I, whose whole is such a trifle, should give one-fifth. There is so much need of money, you know. It is different with rich people; one-tenth of their money is a great deal, and so much good can be accomplished with it."

I winced under Maggie's ingenious argument—such a decided inversion of mine—but she, sweet child, all unconscious of my thoughts, went on to tell me of the good matron at the Home, who had taught her, as a little child, that she had a Father in Heaven ready to be more to her than the father and mother she had lost. "She told me," said Maggie, "that when Jesus left the earth, after His resurrection, He put the missionary work he had been doing for three years—and for that matter, all His life, the matron said—in our hands to do for Him; and He said plainly that everyone of us who love Him shall show it by what we do of the work He loved. If we cannot preach or teach, or give up all our time to Him, here or over the seas, we can at least give a part of our money to Him. She liked to give a tenth, because that was God's own plan for the people He loved; and so must be the division of one's money which pleases Him best. 'It is all right,' the dear matron said one day, 'to give a tenth of our all; and after that if we spare more, we can call it a gift.' She gave us all a tithe-box, and the very first money I earned, all my own, I put a tenth in it."

"So your matron thought that everyone should give a tenth to the Lord, Maggie?"

"No, ma'am," was the quiet answer. "She did not say we ought to; she did not think of it in that way. But she said that, like the other plans the good Lord has made for our every-day living, it is really all to make us good and happy. We are so glad when once we begin to give in that way, and the nine-tenths which we keep are blessed of Him with the one He accepts; so it is lifted above being ordinary money, and does us far more good."

My mind was busy with these sweet words long after Maggie left me, and the question came, "If she can give out of her pitiful poverty, what is my excuse?" Yes, I saw clearly now. I had been all in the wrong, and a stumbling-block to my husband. So, in the evening, as we sat cosily by the fire again, both happy in my returning strength, I said to Dennis, "I have learned a lesson which makes my illness a blessing, dear. Shall I tell you of it?" And then I told him of Maggie's ministering to my soul as well as to my body, and showed him a little box on which was written "tithes." Dennis did not speak at first, but a glad look shone in his eyes, and he clasped my hand very tenderly.

"The Lord's hand is in this, Clara," he said at last. "We will pledge a tithe of all God ever gives us over this little box, won't we?"

It would be a half-truth to say we never miss that money. It has brought us a blessing. Though we are not rich, and probably never will be, we are content, which is far better, and need to fret about matters no more. "Oh, Dennis," I said the other day, "how well worth heeding that suggestion of yours has proved!"

### "Little Drops of Water."

IN Philadelphia alone eight million pennies are dropped in the slot machines in one year—\$80,000 in one city. The amount expended in this way in the whole country must amount to several million dollars, for which the return is a mass of chocolate and gum drops, and some other trifles. This fact is suggestive of one method of doing good. Besides the munificent gifts of millionaires and the smaller contributions of people in ordinary circumstances, there are vast treasures in the pennies of the children which can be saved from useless and hurtful luxuries, and sent out to do good. When every man, woman, and child in the Church learns to do something, the poor will be provided for, churches will be built wherever needed, the ignorant will be instructed, and the darkest corner of the earth will glow with the light of the Gospel.

### Trying His Appetite.

A YOUNG man carelessly formed the habit of taking a glass of liquor every morning before breakfast. An older friend advised him to quit before the habit should grow too strong.

"O, there's no danger; it's a mere notion, I can quit any time," replied the drinker.

"Suppose you try to-morrow morning," suggested the friend.

"Very well; to please you I'll do so, but I assure you there's no cause for alarm."

A week later the young man met his friend again.

"You are not looking well," observed the latter. "Have you been ill?"

"Hardly," replied the other one. "But I am trying to escape a dreadful danger, and I fear that I shall be, before I shall have conquered. My eyes were opened to an imminent peril when I gave you that promise a week ago. I thank you for your timely suggestion."

"How did it affect you?" inquired the friend.

"The first trial utterly deprived me of appetite for food. I could eat no breakfast, and was nervous and trembling all day. I was alarmed when I realized how insidiously the habit had fastened on me, and resolved to turn square about and never touch another drop. The squaring off has pulled me down severely, but I am gaining, and I mean to keep the upper hand after this. Strong drink will never catch me in his net again."