

his usual Sunday rest, after the labors of the week, which, in this case, he considered to have been unusually severe.

"I wonder what he was talking about," he said to himself, thinking of the preacher. "I forgot to take notice; I was too busy behaving. Well, I kept my promise anyway, but, for my life, I don't see what good it did anybody. She looked around for me first thing, the same as I knew she would. She knows how to work things. She brought that in real neat about not giving good measure to everybody, meaning the Lord, and about not looking ahead all the way, meaning—well, there's one or two things she might have meant by that: she might have meant heaven, or she might have meant the day of judgment, or," he paused, "or else she might have meant," he presently added with emphasis, "looking forward to the time when you'd got all you wanted, and had plenty of it, and knew that was all, that your life was pretty near finished, and nothing was coming of it that would last over any time. That's always the worst of living—it uses up so fast."

He rolled over on the grass, and began to whistle a lively air; but broke off suddenly.

"And as for giving good measure to everybody, what is good measure for the Lord? When they're preaching, they tell you the whole business belongs to him; but when they're practising, it seems they get another idea of it. They keep back considerable, the most of them."

Here followed another long pause. This time he did not attempt to whistle, but pursued his meditations with a grave face.

"Maybe they do keep back considerable, but how about myself? I don't see but what I owe the same measure as they do, and how much do I keep back?"

The rustling of leaves and the snapping of fallen boughs gave warning of somebody's approach, and a moment later another boy had thrown himself down beside Fergus.

"Where have you been keeping yourself? It seems you don't feel very sociable to-day. I've looked all over for you. How did you spend your morning?"

"I went to church."

"You did? Had a nice time?"

"Not particular. But I'd promised to go, and I kept my promise."

If Fergus expected an outburst of ridicule, he was disappointed. The new-comer, after chewing the bark from a stick for some minutes without comment, at last said quietly: "Well, I think some of going to church myself sometimes. And then again it doesn't seem hardly worth while to bother with it yet; it seems as if I was safe to wait. The only trouble is that dying comes to people so awful sly sometimes. You can't count on a warning. If you could, why then you

could make all the litter you wanted during the day, and begin and clear it out toward evening, and have everything tidy by the time your company came. It would be more convenient, wouldn't it?"

"I suppose so," said Fergus. "But if a fellow could trust to putting oil, and going to heaven on the jump that way, last thing, I ain't sure but what he'd be a fool to do it."

His companion stared.

"What are you talking about? Why, man, you could have all you wanted, then, of heaven and earth both."

"I ain't sure," repeated Fergus, rising and brushing the leaves from his clothes. "I don't know if the best of heaven is had by just getting there, and I don't know if the best of earth is had either by walling heaven out of it till the last minute. Ma' be you'd miss more both ways than you'd ever catch up with, even if you had forever and ever to do it in."

All the week Fergus kept away from Lucy, and on Sunday he did not go to church. On Tuesday afternoon his little sister came in search of him among the blackberry bushes, to tell him that "a lady" wanted to see him.

"Of course, I knew she was coming," said Fergus, with rueful admiration. "I'm in for it now. I suppose she will want to know the reason of my staying at home last Sunday. If you drop off asleep anywhere near her, she's bound you shall do it with your eyes open."

But instead of the question he expected, Lucy began by asking abruptly, "Fergus, did you ever hear of Mr. Moody?"

"Moody?" repeated Fergus, reflectively. "Do you mean one of those Sunday-school singing-book men?"

"Yes, he is a preacher; he has gone all over the country, and preached to thousands and thousands of people. Well, when he was a young man he picked out a certain pew in the church that he went to, and set his mind to keeping it full every Sunday—full of his guests, that he had invited and brought there himself. I remembered that the week before last, when I saw you sitting up there in the gallery all alone; I thought how much nicer a whole row of you would look. And last Sunday—"

"You thought it harder still, I suppose," interrupted Fergus.

"Yes. Don't you know any people about here who do not go to church?"

"Lots of them," was the concise reply.

"Don't you suppose that you could persuade a fewful to go with you, if you really tried?"

"Perhaps I might. A person would have to tackle them a plenty though, and then begin and tackle them all over again likely,