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A Discarded Photograph.

BY HELEN A. HAWLEY.

Miss Sally Munson carefully turned the key of her room door, locking herself in. She threw off her bonnet and cape with an impatient gesture, seated herself before a table, put on her spectacles, took a package from her black satin bag and opened it. Then she spread out twelve cards, each about three inches by four in size, and apparently just alike.

'I want to examine these by myself,' she said; 'a body can't tell in the gallery.'

Evidently the examination was not quite necessary.

'There isn't a pin to choose betwixt the lot,' she went on. 'Some's darker'n others, that's all. They all look as if I'd drawn a booby prize an' didn't like it. Not one of 'em'll ever be sent to a friend of mine if my face is like that, there's no need to perpetuate it.'

She glanced at the mirror opposite and brightened at the contradiction she saw there. Miss Sally was going on sixty, but it was no flattery to say she didn't look it. The heart in her was young yet, and it beamed in her smiling eyes, but having a picture taken was an ordeal of unusual solemnity, and the camera caught a solemn, somber expression.

It was a long time since Miss Sally had sat for a photograph, and the only thing that induced her to do so now was an advertisement which said she could get a dozen small ones, 'soft finish' latest style in art, for a dollar and a half. They might never be down to that price again, and this prudent woman counted her pennies.

She felt shamefaced when she went to the sitting and begged the artist not to place her picture in his show window. He assured her gravely, 'I never do that, madam, without obtaining consent,' and she did not hear two young girls giggling at her back, nor their comment 'She might know he'd want pretty faces or distinguished people.'

Like many persons who are much alone, Miss Sally talked to herself and now she continued:

'It's a shame to have that dollar and a half wasted but I won't give away one of them. I'll take my shears and slit 'em up, so that even the ragman won't know. I wish I'd given it to missions.'

'It was the money.'

The pasteboard proved pretty stiff for the shears. 'Guess I won't spite myself by spoiling them,' she said, with a laugh; 'and sometimes I need a piece of cardboard. I declare, now these would be just the right size for the bottoms of the bags I'm going to make for the society. When they're covered with silk, nobody'll be the wiser.'

Miss Sally wasn't a woman to let the grass grow under her feet, and next day, she promptly began the bags. They were destined to go in reward packages, sent by the missionary society to different schools in heathen lands.

'Not but what girls in Japan, or India or China, can sew and embroider better than we can maybe,' the president had said, 'but they like foreign things, just as our girls do.'

It was a trifle difficult to realize that a bit of American work could be foreign in another country, but Miss Sally knew how to make pretty bags, and she promised several as her contribution. As she covered the back of one card, pasting the silk neatly down on the side it formed a dainty frame for the photograph.

'Really it doesn't look so bad,' she thought as the elderly face look up at her, softened by the effect of its surrounding. 'I wish I dared. Nobody'd know it. I will—there!'

With her usual decision Miss Sally settled it. The funnel leaves of the needle-book which was to be fastened inside the bottom of each bag, should lie right on that face, with no silk between, and the inner cover being tied down with a bow of baby ribbon no person on this side of the globe would know. She wondered what the heathen girl on the other side would think, when she discovered the secret.

'I shall be praying for her,' Miss Sally whispered softly.

This new idea gave a tremendous zest to the work. Ten bags went off to as many schools, in at least, five different countries.

'The one I hacked with the shears shall go into the stove, but I'll keep the other photo to humble me if I get vain,' she laughed, and laid it away in the farther corner of the upper bureau drawer. Then the lonely woman took ten heathen girls into her heart, and felt like a foster mother to them.

Somehow life opened into new and marvelous interests. She subscribed to the missionary magazine and pored over its pages. Every picture of a heathen girl whose face had been uplifted by the gospel seemed to belong to her family. She traveled mentally in remote places and studied strange social customs. As months went by Miss Sally became one of the 'lights' of the society, so constant in her attendance, so intelligent in her judgments as to methods, but the dear secret remained her own.

About two years later the society had the privilege, rare in a retired village, of entertaining a returned missionary. 'Miss Mary David from India will address a meeting in the church on Thursday evening. She will be attended by one of the native pupils in her school, a Hindu child widow. After this service Mrs. Prentiss, the president of our missionary society, will give a reception to these guests at her house, to which all the members of the society are invited.' It is not usual to read invitations to receptions from the pulpit, but the consensus of opinions pronounced this eminently proper. More than one non-member felt a sudden impulse to duty and paid her fee to join before the eventful evening.

When it arrived, no keener ears listened to the addresses than Miss Sally Munson's, but she hurried out directly after the service. 'It's only a step,' she said, 'and my bonnet isn't a bit becoming. I'll take it off and just run into Mrs. Prentiss bareheaded.' She smoothed her hair over the still unfurrowed brow, put on her lace pelerine and set her brooch, with the hair in it, straight. With Miss Sally fashions didn't change often; she had only one best black silk, and it happened she was dressed exactly as when she sat for those disappointing photographs.

The parlors were filling rapidly as she entered, but the hostess soon caught sight of her and hastened to present one who was really becoming a leader. The child-widow was there now arrayed in her native costume of white drapery. She was a girl of fifteen. Married at seven, going to her husband at ten, a widow at twelve, an outcast after that, condemned to all sorts of privations and ill-treatment for a year and a half, then rescued and placed in what was heaven to her—the mission school—this was her history, told now in detail by Miss Davis to the group of sympathetic women.

The girl was beautiful, her rich complexion and liquid eyes set off by the white head covering, and the suffering of child-widowhood still lurking in a half sad expression. When she saw Miss Sally she started in a surprised manner, but immediately controlled herself. Later, when everybody was moving about and conversation was more general, Miss Sally approached the stranger. She wanted to talk with her personally.

Before she could speak, the girl said timidly, in broken English, 'Would the Mem Sahib come to the attiring room?' and led the way to a bedroom where she had put on her native costume.

Miss Sally followed, astonished. The Hindu girl seemed so excited and pleased. Eagerly she opened a travelling case, took out a silk bag and turned it inside out.

'See,' said she, 'it is the Mem Sahib herself,' and she held a photograph close to the older woman's wondering face.

Miss Sally sat down, trembling and overcome. 'How good the Lord is to let me see one of my children!'

'And to me,' said the smiling girl, with shining eyes. 'Oh, it did comfort my heart so sad—the dear face!'

Then this child-widow told how she had discovered the face in the bottom of the bag, how it had grown to be her friend, her mother, what fancies she had woven about it, how it had helped her with its sweetness and courage—all told in that soft, oriental voice. Ah! this was more than happiness—it was blessedness!

Of course it could not last. The child-widow

must travel on; she must become a medical student, and then go back to help those poor, shut-up zenana women in her own land. But letters, frequent letters could travel over distances, too, and they did—a chain of love between the two so strangely brought together.

One of Miss Sally's 'dream children' had materialized, but what of the nine?

'Probably we shan't see each other in the flesh,' she thought. 'T'would be more than I could ask to have the Lord repeat himself that way, but I think he'll let me know them up there, even if I do wear a white dress 'stead this black silk.'

And then, recalling her remark at the first inspection of the photographs, she laughed a happy laugh. 'T'wasn't a booby prize I drew, anyhow. The Congregationalist.'

How Laura Gained Recruits

BY SALLY CAMPBELL.

Laura had reached the gate when she hesitated. 'I believe I'll try for those boys once more. It will not do any good, I suppose, but at least it won't do any harm. And then they will be off my conscience at any rate.'

So she skirted round by the side of the house, and presently appeared before her two brothers and her two cousins as they lay stretched out under the trees in various full length attitudes.

'Come on with me to Sunday school, you lazy things,' said Laura. 'It will be a nice variety for you and do you good.'

'No, thank you, Sis,' said Clarence, 'the trouble with me is that I'm too good already, if you will excuse my modesty.'

'There are some people,' remarked Chris, scathingly, 'in whom any amount of modesty can be excused.'

'You'll come, Chris, won't you?'

'Why, you see the trouble with me is that I'm not good enough. I'd go in a minute if I was. Perhaps Jim would like it, only he seems to be asleep.'

Jim snored aloud.

'Yes' you hear that. Queer; he must have gone off quite suddenly; he was as wide awake as anybody half a second ago. He'll be so disappointed when he finds out what he has missed, but you needn't try to rouse him, he's such an awfully heavy sleeper. I guess Tom would go, though.'

'I happen to know Tom wouldn't,' said that youth energetically, 'he doesn't care as much as he might for stuffy little school-rooms and hard board benches. The ground does well enough for him on a day like this.'

'Don't be late on our account, sis,' said Clarence.

And Laura took the hint.

'I told you so,' said Chris, when she had turned the corner of the house, 'I knew she would be after us, she hasn't passed a Sunday since Tom and I came. She's a persistent little Christian, believes in home missions, and lives up to it.'

'Foreign ones, too,' said Clarence, with some brotherly pride. 'Just lately she pruned off quite a lot of the fancy trimmings that girls love, and sent the proceeds to China or somewhere else. She thought she was being as deep about it as mid-ocean, but I suspected what she was at, and when I fixed the guilt on her she couldn't deny it.'

There was a pause, during which Jim, who had waked up, chewed a blade of grass to its extreme end, then before beginning on another, blurted out abruptly:

'I say—'

The boys looked at him.

'Well, what?' asked Clarence.

'Nothing.'

'I say so, too, said Chris. 'Why shouldn't we? I haven't a doubt but what we'd live through it, and she has lived through plenty to oblige us. It seems to me it ought to be about time for her to have a turn now.'

'What are you talking about any way?' said Tom. 'Ask Jim. He knows.'

'Why, I was thinking,' said Jim, apologetically, 'that it might not be so bad to go to Sunday-school for once, since Laura has her heart so set on it.' I

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