

The Inglenook

Leading a Soul to Christ.

Emily Powers sat in her room one evening in a retrospective mood. She had fallen into that discouragement which such moods are apt to induce. The trouble was about her work. Ever since she had joined the church, at the age of fourteen, she had taught in the Sunday school, engaged in mission work, and among the needy and at home had tried to become a living embodiment of that principle which was the characteristic feature of her Lord's life when on earth: That the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Six or eight years had passed away, but in all that time she was never allowed to know how much of an impression her small but earnest efforts had made, nor how far into the darkness her little light had cast its beams. She could not tell of a single soul whose wandering feet she had been the means of guiding into the strait and narrow way.

As she sat in the deepening twilight a gentle tap at the door aroused her, and a cheery "Come in," which carried sadness in its tones, was followed by the entrance of a bright and beautiful girl somewhat younger than herself.

"I am glad I have found you here and alone. No, do not light a lamp. I love this twilight hour," said she, with a certain sweet impulsiveness in her tones as she sat down on a footstool beside her with an air of almost childish docility.

To take a first look at Lizzie Day, a stranger might fancy that her bright color, glistening brown eyes and general carriage and decided suggestion of chic in all that she wore, were the sum and end of Lizzie's consciousness and attention. Especially when it could not be seen that the best and most eligible of all the youthful swains were vying with one another in their attentions to her at all the evening gatherings which the students were now and then allowed to attend, and that some young and chivalrous knight was generally at her most devoted service, when needed, at the evening parties in which the prettiest girl in the school was ever the reigning belle. She was certainly the last girl in the school whom Emily had ever suspected would be interested in religious matters. She was, therefore, much surprised when, after a little friendly exchange of greetings and some small school girl talk, Lizzie brought the subject gradually around to Professor Mann's weekday prayer meetings, which were arousing a deep-felt and earnest interest in the whole school.

"Emily," she said, "do you know that for a long time I have really wished to become a Christian? The only trouble is I do not understand what it is to be a Christian. You know I have been brought up well and I always attend church and Sunday-school. I can't say I have really been very, very wicked, you

know. I know I am wicked enough, but I have always tried to do as well as I could. But the more I see real live Christians, know how they live and hear them talk, and see what a happiness and peace they enjoy, the more I want to know their secret. But there I stop. I do not know what to do or how to live any different from the way in which I am living now.

"Lizzie," she replied, after a moment's thought, and a glad, sympathetic pressure of her hand, "I can not think of any better help to give you than that our Lord gave to all who were in doubt about the way. You know he said that if a man would do the will of his Father he would then be able to prove whether his doctrine was from God or not. It seems to me that this saying of our Lord just covers your case. You may not know the peace and joy of resting in God; you may not be able to understand fully what the life of a Christian is; but there is one thing you can do. You can begin from this night forward to do all that God requires of a servant of his. I think, then, that you will see this sacred mystery gradually unfolding itself to you."

"Please tell me, Emily, all that a Christian must do," said Lizzie.

"Take it for granted that he believes in God, and that Christ, the Son of God, lived and died for the whole world. I should think the next thing for him to do would be to seek Christ in his daily devotions, and to endeavor to imitate so far as possible the example of his Master's life. It seems to me that Christ's chiefest thought was to do the will of his Father, to follow the path of duty, no matter where it lay nor to what it led. That was his underlying motion in all his work. His actual life work was one grand, noble sacrifice for others. He went about doing good. His whole life of sorrow and suffering was lived and endured not for himself, but for the world that rejected him. I think if you will try to see where your path of duty lies and strive to follow it, letting your actual labor be to minister to others, you will soon discover the happy secret. You know, dear Lizzie, He is not far from any of us."

"Emily," she said softly, "I will try your plan." Then the two girls parted.

Some time passed away; Emily's time was much occupied. She saw but little of Lizzie, and then only from time to time, and Lizzie did not mention the subject again to her. Then came the summer vacation, and the two girls went to their homes. In the fall both returned to finish their school work, and it was not until the January week-day prayer-meetings were begun again that Emily was to know what had sprung from such sowing. One night when the students were all gathered in the chapel, and the interest was more than usually manifest, and a profound, serious impression was evident in most of

the faces present, Emily felt her heart almost springing up in her throat as she saw Lizzie rise in her seat for the first time and express her devotion to her Master, Christ.

"For a long time I have wished to be a Christian," she said. "When I was in doubt about the way, I went to a friend who told me that if I would take upon myself all the duties of a real Christian, seek Christ in my daily devotions, and in all things strive to imitate His blessed example, she thought then I would gradually come to understand and experience something of the blessed peace and happiness which I longed for, and which I saw was possessed by all His followers. I tried this plan, and to-night I am happier than I ever was before. I now love the Master, whom I have endeavored to serve. I thank Him for drawing me to Him, and my friend for the helpful words which she spoke to me on the night I asked her for counsel."

As Lizzie spoke, her cheeks flushed and her winsome face shone brightly with the light of her new and joyful experience, and before she finished large tears welled up into her beautiful eyes, overflowed the tender lids, and dropped from the long lashes on her cheeks and rested there. Emily could with difficulty restrain her own tears. She felt almost like exclaiming:

"Now testest thou Thy servant depart in peace."

As Lizzie was a great favorite in the school, her testimony made no small impression on those present. One and another, encouraged by this beautiful young girl's example, arose and made their first confession.

And this was not all. As the meetings continued, the interest increased and spread throughout the whole school, and Emily had the joy of speaking with many more, who were blessed with the helpful words, and thus influenced to follow the call of the Master.—Observer.

Living at Our Best.

Do not try to do a great thing; you may waste all your life looking for the opportunity which may never come. But since little things are always claiming your attention, do them as they come, from a great motive, for the glory of God, to win his smile of approval, and to do good to men. It is harder to plod on in obscurity, acting thus, than to stand on the high places of the field, within the view of all and do deeds of valor at which rival armies stand still to gaze. But no such act goes without the swift recognition and the ultimate recompense of Christ.

To fulfil faithfully the duties of your station; to use to the uttermost the gifts of your ministry, to bear chafing annoyances and trivial irritations as martyrs bore the pillory and the stake; to find the one noble trait in people who try and molest you; to put the kindest construction on unkind acts and words; to love with the love of God even the unthankful and evil, to be content to be a fountain in the midst of a wild valley of stones, nourishing a few lichens and flowers, or now and again a thirsty sheep; and do this always, and not for the praise of man, but for the sake of God—this makes a great life.—F. B. Meyer.