

Left alone, Katherine faced the thought which was but the key to an unexplored region.

First why had she objected to Clara? Because Clara dressed so plainly. She loved dainty attire, and Clara was rather careless on that point. But Clara was obliged to work very hard, caring for an invalid father and little brothers and sisters. True, there was nobility of soul and life, while dress was a thing.—Katherine smiled sadly as she discovered her weakness. Clara should be one of the committee, that was settled. And there were other discoveries. Wonderful new ideas respecting problems which had puzzled her came now like inspirations.

And what are our best ideas but hints from the great Infinite mind, which we learn to recognize, and use, and call our own?

Only a few days after the arbor meeting Katherine called a "special" in her own room. Her face was very bright, and she met the girls with a warm cordiality.

"Where is boasting then? It is excluded," she said, opening the subject. "I was a Brahman, I really was; for my objection to our dear Clara was only cotton threads, more or less, in Swiss mull and such things. I never saw before the wide, wide difference between gratitude for what you have received and pride in the same. Now then, my beloved hearers, listen to the 'application' which I should have made in my paper on caste." And Katherine read, "Perhaps God wants us to learn some lessons from the heathen. Perhaps in all the wide world He sees no sadder sight than a Christian who is satisfied with his cotton strings of religious acquisitions and good works, or his mental achievements, or his possession of this world's good things."

"Satisfied and selfish I would say," added Beth thoughtfully; "Yes, I think so."

"Now girls," said Katherine briskly, "fearing we might lose sight of this lesson, I have prepared these mite-boxes," and she drew them from the desk. "I have tied a cotton string around each, yea, a string, not a baby ribbon. Every time we find ourselves prinking over our good clothes, good looks or good anything else which makes us feel above other people, even the heathen, in goes a penance dime or nickel, with a little prayer for the old Brahman and—ourselves; will you?"

Very graciously they received the suggestive boxes and bore them away.

To the beaches, the mountains, somewhere, anywhere, the happy girls scattered for their summer outings. It was September when they met again, this time at Sarah's home.

The seven boxes stood in a row on the table.

"Now lest we be puffed up by our penances, the money is to be poured into this bag by the treasurer, without counting," said Katherine.

Beth stepped forward and with musical jingling the coins fell from their hiding places. "Whose was heaviest?" whispered Lulu. Beth shook her head. "They were all heavy," she replied, "and Ogilvie, I shall always bless the cotton string penance. I have really tried to break my little sacred dishes and things this summer—I was surprised to find I had so many."

"And if Beth can say that, what do you think I have had to do?" asked Katherine. "That Brahman is a near relative of mine, I find. Give me my box again." The other girls quietly took their boxes, and Beth drew the ribbons of the pretty silk bag, heavy with coins of two-fold value.—*Woman's Missionary Friend.*

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