

looked down upon at once. No, no; it will never do to begin there.'

Mr. Baker winced a little at this, but made no reply. He knew that it was useless to argue the matter with his wife, so he took up the next item on the list, with but little hope of having any better success with that one than with the first.

'Well,' he said, scowling a little, 'you've spent enough on dinners, receptions, teas and the like, to keep a good sized family for a year. And here's our trip to the seashore last summer. We did pay most ridiculously at that hotel, and we were not a bit cooler than we should have been at father's house up among the hills. Seems to me we might manage to keep cool a little cheaper next summer,' and as Mr. Baker finished speaking he looked cautiously at his wife, to see how she liked the suggestion he had just made. It was plain to be seen that it did not meet with her approval. There was a sarcastic smile on her face, and curling her lips rather scornfully, she said:

'It is impossible to cut down in our entertaining, for Helen will be in society this winter, and that means more parties than ever. And as to our summer tour—here Mrs. Baker paused a while before she added: 'Well, what would the Stones, and the Gregorys, and the Bartons think if we were to go to a little poky country place, instead of a fashionable seaside resort?'

'I don't see what we are to do. It seems impossible to economize anywhere.'

'Reckon we'll just go on the we've been doing. The more we make, the more we'll spend.'

'Is there nothing more?' she queried 'Have you gone over all the items on the list?'

'N-no,' said Mr. Baker hesitatingly, 'here's one yet. "Church and charity—two hundred and fifty dollars." But,' he added quickly, 'if we can't cut down in our gratification of pride and vanity, we shall certainly not begin in what we give to carry on the Lord's work.'

'Dear me!' exclaimed Mrs. Baker, with a toss of her head, 'you're wonderfully conscientious. Much more so than I am, I can assure you. Now we can cut that down one-half or more just as well as not and still keep up appearances before the world.'

'Well, now that you are so anxious to economize along that line, I suppose you'll withdraw from the "New Woman Club," "Eastern Star," and all other clubs and lodges that you're into, eh?'

Mrs. Baker's face grew very red, and, after some hesitation, she managed to say: 'W-why, no; I—I guess I can't give them up. They're different, you know. Society has too many demands upon me for me to attempt to keep up with all the lines of church work. And we have too many obligations to meet to spend money foolishly for missions and a dozen other things. We can and will dispense with them next year.'

'I suppose it's just as you say,' said Mr. Baker meekly, and thus the subject was dropped. Mrs. Baker had the satisfaction of knowing that she had won the day, as she nearly always did on such occasions.

The Bakers were the leading people in Dalton. Mr. Baker owned the largest retail house in the city, and his home was the finest, and situated on one of the most fashionable streets. He was a plain matter-of-fact business man, country born and country bred, and very simple in his tastes. His wife was exactly his opposite. She loved society and was the acknowledged leader in Dalton. Mrs. James Baker was quoted everywhere. Invitations to her parties were eagerly sought after, and her bonnets and gowns were copied by her less fortunate sisters. She was identified with every club and society worthy of mention. She even

affected a little of the religious, but that great lady would affect anything that might help her along in the world.

Far away from the stately Baker mansion, in a back street, was an old tenement house. In the third story lived a widow, Mrs. Hardin, and her two children, Frank and Edith. A year before, when the husband and father died, they left their country home and came to the city to make their way in the world as best they could. Frank now had a good position in Mr. Baker's store, and Mrs. Hardin did plain sewing, while Edith went to school. On the evening of which we are writing they were all gathered around the supper table in the cozy little kitchen, recounting the varied experiences of the day.

This led them to discuss their own expenses, and to make plans for the future.

It will be necessary for us to be economical until we get fairly started,' Mrs. Hardin was saying. 'Frank and I have work all the time, but now that winter is here our expenses will be heavier than they have been. There are so many things we need, and then our church—'

'That just reminds me,' interrupted Edith, 'that Mr. Jackson asked me to-day what we thought we could do for the church next year. I told him we hadn't talked the matter over, but I was afraid we couldn't do very much. Oh, yes,' she added, 'I came by Eldon's this evening, and they are still saying that jacket for me. It is a beauty.'

'If we have to economize, it shall not be in our contributions to the Lord's work,' said Mrs. Hardin, very decidedly, 'No one enjoys the church and its privileges more than we do, and I have been thinking that we ought to try to do more next year than ever before. God has been good to us in so many ways, and I feel that we ought to make him a thank-offering for one blessing in particular—our dear boy's conversion,' and there was a world of love and tenderness written on that mother's face, as she glanced at the manly boy at her side who had but recently come into the kingdom.

Edith looked very sober after what her mother had said. She had all a girl's love for pretty things, and had set her heart on having a jacket that was displayed in one of the shop windows. Her mother had finally consented to get it for her, although at the same time Edith knew that it was entirely too high in price for her slender purse.

'Mother,' she finally said, 'I want to give something to that thank-offering and I—I guess I'll not get that expensive jacket, but take a cheaper one. It will be just as warm, and then the five dollars difference will help your fund considerably.'

'You are a dear, good girl, Edith,' said Mrs. Hardin, tears of joy shining in her eyes. 'I knew you would make a little sacrifice for his sake. I had intended to get a new bonnet and shawl, but I can do without them. My bonnet will do another winter and my shawl is good and warm even if it is a little faded.'

'I had about half promised the boys to join one of their clubs,' Frank began, 'but I will not do it now. I'll give you what I would have to pay to become a member.'

Thus they went on with their planning, and they found that by saving a little here and a little there that they could give quite a sum to the cause they loved so well.

The good church people were astonished when they learned that the Bakers, who were looked upon as the wealthiest members of the congregation, would give comparatively nothing to the support of the church the coming year. There were rumors of a failure in business, but they soon discovered that these were false. They could dress as well, ride in as fine carriages and give just as many grand parties.

Why the Bakers gave so little was a great mystery, as was also the fact that the poor widow could give so much. But the mystery of Mrs. Hardin's giving was soon solved. Sunday after Sunday she came to church wearing the same dingy bonnet and faded shawl, while Edith wore a very plain jacket. Their dress was very distasteful to the fashionable Mrs. Baker in her rich silk and costly furs. One day as she and her husband were going home from church she remarked that 'she paid Mrs. Hardin enough for her sewing for her to dress better than she did.'

'Perhaps you do,' said Mr. Baker, quietly; 'but I know enough about Mrs. Hardin to know that she loves Christ better than self.'

A few weeks afterward, when the minister took up the mission collection, Mrs. Hardin gave him twenty-five dollars, which she explained was 'a thank-offering for the conversion of her son, with the prayer that it might be the means of rescuing one of his lost ones.'

When the minister thought of Mrs. Baker, who had grudgingly given him a dollar, his face hardened a little; but there was a kindly light in his eyes each time he thought of the poor widow's gift and the sacrifice it cost her to make it.

'Surely,' he said, 'it is like unto the alabaster box broken upon the head of Christ.'—Bertha H. Corn, in 'Christian Standard.'

## A Day of Whole Things.

(Mary E. Mitchell.)

If you can sit down just a moment till I finish the button-holes, then you can take the jacket, Miss Florence; there, right by the window! That barrel-chair ain't so uncomfortable as it looks. I'm real mortified you should have to wait when I promised it the first thing, but you see, little Bennie Holden is very low and I sat up with him the most of the night, and I suppose I slept too long when I lay down in the morning.'

'It's a shame for you to do a stitch!' exclaimed Florence, impulsively, as she noticed the red, tired eyes, and pale face. 'Ted doesn't really need the jacket to-day.'

'It's good of you to say that; but if it ain't the jacket, it's something else; I cannot afford to lose a whole day.' Miss Ferry's needle flew in and out of the fine blue cloth. 'Your little brother'll look real nice in this suit; he's a handsome boy, anyway,' she said.

'How do you like my new gown, Miss Ferry?'

Miss Ferry looked at the girl. The brown hair waved about the soft face; the dark eyes sparkled with happy young life, and cheeks glowed with healthful color. The new dress was simple, dainty, and perfectly adapted to the girlish figure.

'It's sweet?' said Miss Ferry. 'It looks just like you.'

Florence laughed. 'Do you know, that is a very pretty compliment?' she said.

'I suppose, now, it's new—all new—not made over or anything?' asked the little seamstress.

'Why, yes,' replied Florence, amused at the question. 'Why do you ask?'

'Nothing; only I was thinking how nice that must be. I never had a new dress in my life.'

Florence stared at the small, thin figure.

'What do you mean?' she said.

'Just that, dear. I never had a whole new dress in my life.'

'I never heard of such a thing!' gasped the girl.

'Very likely not, Miss Florence. Your pa is a rich man and you're his only daughter. There were eleven of us counting the boys, and little enough to feed and clothe us on.