

INA'S BOX.

MYRA GOODWIN PLANTZ.

HEN Ina Miller took her missionary box, she said, "I am going to put in every penny I can do without," yet in a whole year only four pennies had dropped in the box.

"I can't help it, mamma," she said as the missionary bank came to light when she was helping her mother pack the big trunk. "You won't let me beg my missionary money, and when I do get a penny I have to buy a slate pencil, or a hair ribbon, or"—

"Candy, or paper dolls, or pop corn," suggested mamma.

Ina hung her head, but, as older people do, soon found an excuse.

"Well, mamma, I don't have half the pennies other girls do, and when they get these things I have to get some too. I meant to earn my missionary money, but the rag money went for your birthday present, and the dish-wiping wages got my slippers and mitts."

"Yes," answered Mrs. Miller soberly. "But if all of God's children treated the missionary cause as you do, giving when they want nothing themselves, the schools for little heathen girls would close, the dear orphans be turned into the street, most of the churches and Sunday schools would die, and few children in those dark lands would hear about Jesus. Every little girl who eats up or wastes her pennies keeps back the time when everybody will know about Jesus."

This was serious; so Ina tucked her box in the trunk, determined to get grandpa to help her.

It was so lovely at the farm Ina forgot about the heathen children for some time, but one day she came across her box in the trunk. She ran at once to grandpa with it. "Ah," said the old gentleman. "This is an important matter. Anybody who takes a missionary pledge, and a mite-box is that, has to settle the account with God, and I can't pay your debts to Him."

"Oh, Grandpa, I did not think it meant so much!" cried Ina. "Do help me, for we return the boxes in October, and school begins in a week."

"We are now gathering the early apples. I can't give you any, that would be money; but you may pick a tree on shares. There is a Pippin, that is full and low, and I'll help you with the high branches," was the answer.

With a beaming face Ina filled her apron, and carried the apples to the barrel which her grandfather was filling. He measured all she brought, and credited her with half.

"I get eighty cents a bushel," he said, "so you will get forty." It was a long time before Ina received four dimes, but she was very happy when they jingled in the little box.

The next morning she was at her tree early, but she soon left it to see what was going on at the house. Uncle Charlie had come with his spring wagon full of cousins on their way to Clear Lake, where they were to fish and have a picnic in honor of Elsie's birthday.

"We're going to have fried fish and candy and lemonade and peanuts and fire-crackers," cried little Charlie.

Ina danced with delight, but grandpa, who had come from the orchard, said, "your apples have to be shipped to-day. If you go you won't fill your box."

Tears came to Ina's eyes as she hesitated. She had always wanted to see Clear Lake and the wonderful rocks near, but, if she did not fill her box, some heathen children would lose a Bible, or stay a shorter time at school.

"Grandpa, I won't go," she said bravely. "I might have denied myself a little, and filled my box long ago," and, before the cousins could coax her, Ina was working at her tree.

That evening a very tired little girl dropped two dollars in her missionary box.

"I now have four dollars and twenty cents, grandpa," she said. "May I help till it's full? I didn't put in pennies, because I've always given to the Lord the pennies, and kept the nickels and dimes for myself."

Grandpa gave Ina more work until five dollars were packed in the little missionary box, and she knew this would keep some girl in India in a Christian school and home, a third of a year. You can imagine how happy this made Ina.

"Where are you going, grandpa?" she asked, as grandpa drove to the door the morning before Ina's visit was to close.

"We've been working so hard I thought we'd fish to-day. Grandma has a big basket of dinner ready, and I've sent word for the cousins to meet us at Clear Lake," was the answer.

"Splendid," cried Ina. "Now I can have a good time there, for I won't be cheating God with an empty missionary box."

H. C. FRIEND.

"Rev. J. Hudson Taylor well says: 'We need persons who will consecrate their lives to Foreign Mission service at home. It is for some to consecrate their lives, their thoughts, their prayers to just this service. I believe that some of the best missionary work done today is done by invalids who never leave their bedroom, or by old people, or by those who are very poor and have not much to give; but they give the Lord what is most precious—a true, yearning heart, a constant remembrance, a constant prayer.'"