

Marian, a little bright-eyed, bright-haired, laughing maiden of eight summers. She wore sunshine always, and wherever she stepped came gladness and happiness like the joy that greets the sun in early spring.

All day long her sweet voice was heard singing through the house or roaming in the garden, and wherever it reached James Niggardly's ears it seemed to wake up something of the old better self that lay sleeping within. Everybody loved her, they couldn't help themselves about that. But her father's devotion was more than love—she was his idol. And marvellous was the power she had with him. The hard, stern, selfish Jim Niggardly found nothing a trouble that little Marian asked, and nothing was a sacrifice that could please her, whatever it might be. Why you might have come upon him amidst ledger and day-book, sitting there at his office desk—he the great James Niggardly, Esquire, with little Marian at his side making all his busy world stand still, whilst he bent over the troublesome work of mending her broken doll. If ever his voice regained its old ring and the cheeriness of former days, it was as little Marian ran for a romp. If anything brought back the simple, kindly Jim Niggardly that used to be, it was as he yielded to some request of his little maiden's.

As is so often the case with children who die young, she was full of an old-fashioned religioness—very simple, yet so constant and so real that it seemed the growth of years. Does not Heaven mature the spiritual in such, and make these little ones who are going to join the saints in light, meet for their inheritance?

One day when she was not yet four years of age, her father was lying in a darkened room suffering from some temporary indisposition. The silence was disturbed by a very gentle knock at the door, followed at once by the intrusion of a sunny face and sunny hair, and a little voice asked plaintively, "May I come in?" And Marian crept over and sat down beside the sofa.

"Papa," she whispered, "if it won't hurt you I am come to read to you." Quite unable to read, she opened a book she brought with her, and, as if reading, she repeated with exquisite simplicity these words that she had learned:—

"And they brought young children to Jesus that he should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, and put His hands upon them, and blessed them."

Then she closed the book and kissed him very gently, whispering, "Good-bye, papa; I hope that will do you good. I have asked Jesus to make you better, and He will, I know." And she left him in tears.

Little Marian's love to Jesus was not only an affection for Him who had long ago lived a life of yearning pity, and who had died for all men on the cross; nor was it only the thought of the glorious King who hears and helps us when we cry unto Him. It was the devotion of her whole being to One who was to her a constant Presence and a Personal Friend. There was not a thought, not a feeling, about anything, that she did not share with Him. Her toys, her dresses, her opinions of people, all the little incidents that made up each day of her life, were talked of to Him with a simplicity and confidence that realised Him as "the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." The little maiden loved Him with all her heart, and could keep nothing from Him.

With Mister Horn she was a great favourite, and many a visit was paid for an hour's talk in the garden with Marian. To him perhaps she owed much of the intense love that she felt for the Saviour, for he, more than any other, had told her of Him. She had learned his favourite text when she was very little, and all the thoughts and motives of her life were shaped and coloured by it.

"Mamma," she often said, "can you tell how it is that Jesus should care so much for me, and love me? Isn't it wonderful, Mamma. He gave Himself for me. I do love him for it, very, very, very much. Don't you, Mamma?" Sometimes she stood quietly by the window, wrapped in some deep thought, and then looking up, she would say—"O, Mamma, I do love Jesus so—I want to give Him everything; you and papa, and all of us, and Mister Horn, and all

that I've got; and the sun and the flowers, and everything there is. You know He gave Himself for me."

Without any formal resolution on her part, she instinctively came to look upon all her money as belonging to her dearest Friend. It was perhaps the only thing that she had absolutely in her own disposal, and so she naturally gave it to Him to whom she was so devoted. A money-box was the treasury of her little offerings, and of her possessions nothing was more prized than this. To her mind Jesus was still standing watching the gifts that came into the treasury. One day her father thought the sum too large to be given all at once, and hinted as much. Little Marian looked up in wonder and said, "I must put it all in, you know, papa, or else Jesus won't be able to look at me with a smile, and say, 'She did cast in all that she had.'"

THE CEDAR CHEST.

It was a pleasant home-like room, where Miss Jerusha and Miss Abby Brown sat in the twilight of a May evening: sat so quietly, that the click of the knitting-needles was plainly heard.

It had been a busy, house-cleaning day. Betty, the maid of all work, and Miss Abby had finished the attic, and the "spare room," and as usual the contents of the "cedar chest" had been brought down in two large clothes-baskets for Miss Jerusha to look over, her lameness preventing her going up and down stairs.

She had unfolded each garment, shaken it carefully, looked it over, folded it again, and when all was ready, the baskets were taken to the attic, and these relics of departed friends laid again in the chest. It was always a sad duty, and memory was busy to-night recalling the loved ones whose garments she had just handled.

At last she spoke, "Abby, I am thinking what brother John's wife will do with the things in the cedar chest, when we are gone. Of course, we can't expect her to set as much store by them as we do, and I've often heard her say, that she will keep nothing that she does not need, and that would be of use to some one else. I had rather give them away myself, and—and—I will do it." The last few words came slowly and with effort.

Miss Abby was dumb, not knowing what to say. Fifteen years younger than her sister, who seemed to regard her as a child, she seldom expressed her opinion, except to assent to Miss Jerusha.

Now, after a few moments' silence, and dropping of many stitches, she merely said, "Yes, sister," and tried to pick up her stitches and her thoughts at the same time. How glad she was she dared not say. Her health allowed her to mingle more in the busy world than her sister could do, and in her visits among the poor she had often thought longingly of the garments that might keep so many warm. Now that sister had made up her mind, she knew that the "decree" was unalterable, and was already planning the distribution, when Miss Jerusha continued:

"Betty shall have father's cloak for her father; he is a good old Scotchman, and goes regularly to 'kirk.' I wish he had had it before. Mother's best merino and the knit shawl will be just the thing for Deacon Kelsey's widow, and her cloak will make a Sunday suit for each of Mrs. Hepburn's twin boys. Brother George's clothes"—but we will not tell it all.

"Let all go," Miss Jerusha said, and Abby of course responded "Yes, sister."

And they did it, not without trembling hands and voices, and eyes that were often very misty; but there were no regrets, but instead, a blessed consciousness of doing right.

A few days after, the elder sister said, "I am glad I decided to give away those clothes, and I don't like to think of the empty chest. It would make a good cupboard, turn it on one end, and two or three shelves put in, for that family that were burned out last week in Elm-court."

Reader, have you a cedar chest in your attic?—*Adel. and Guar.*

To be a man's own fool is bad enough; but the vain man is everybody's.—*William Penn.*

No one can become a Christian of strength and maturity without undergoing severe trials. What fire is to gold, such is affliction to the believer. It burns up the dross, and makes gold shine forth with unalloyed lustre.