

Our Young Folks.

THE IDEAL.

The ideal is hard of attainment,
Like a grand, rugged height it appears,
And we falter while struggling to gain it—
Our dreams giving place to grave fears.

While the living, the beautiful Present,
Too often we slight in our quest,
The real, with commonplace duties,
Makes no answering chord in the breast.

Oh, glorify each needful duty,
Prize the blossoms that spring by the way,
Then the real shall prove the ideal—
To-morrow, the grandeur of to-day.

—Zion's Herald.

TWO BLACK MARKS.

Old Auntie Pettibone was sick. She sat at the front window of the little cottage where she lived alone, looking very woe-begone indeed, with her shoulders wrapped tightly in a shabby plaid shawl and her head bundled about with an old white stocking. The portion of her poor black face which was visible seemed drawn into lines of pain.

She watched the passers-by mournfully for a while, but though several cast quick glances at her no one cared to stop and ask old auntie what her trouble was. But very soon Jerry Dare came spinning past on his bicycle on his way to school. Old auntie's face brightened up, losing its tense lines as she rapped loudly on the window pane and frantically motioned him to stop. But Jerry, with a brief glance in her direction and a muttered explanation about an "old bother," pursued his way faster than before.

His schoolmate, Clint Warren, who was walking briskly along on the opposite side of the street, was also attracted by old auntie's rapping. He glanced back at her disappointed face in the window, wondering what she had wanted with Jerry Dare.

"Maybe she's sick, with her head tied up so funny," he soliloquized, as he slackened his pace a little. "Jerry might have stopped to see what she wanted when she motioned him to, I think. If she is black, she's got some feelings."

But he did not glance back again. He was obliged to hasten on, for he had no bicycle to wheel him rapidly to school, and he was in more of a hurry than usual this morning, making up the time he had spent, before leaving home, in pacifying baby Sue, who had fallen and hurt her foot.

His bright face was somewhat clouded at Jerry's misconduct and the picture of old auntie's disappointment, and at the next corner where he had to wait for the electric car to whiz past, he delayed longer than was necessary.

"Pshaw," he said inwardly, giving the strap holding his school books a tighter tug as he started across the street. "It's not my mix. If I went back to find out what's the matter I'd be late, and I haven't had a black mark for tardiness this year. Neither has Jerry, and he'd come out ahead at the end of the year."

But old auntie's mournful face had impressed him deeply, and he couldn't shake off the feeling of pity that had taken possession of him.

"Maybe she is sick and hasn't anybody with her. She looked awful lonesome," he found himself thinking as he sighted the schoolhouse. But as he reached the gate and was about to enter the school yard, he surprised the boys congregated there by suddenly wheeling about and running back with rapid strides in the direction of home.

"You'll be late and I'll beat you," he heard Jerry yell after him. Still he did not slacken his pace until he reached old auntie's door all out of breath. She was still sitting at the window, but was holding her head in her hands. She arose in answer to his knock, and as she opened the door, her

big, black eyes expressed considerable amazement at sight of the little man standing there.

"I thought maybe you were sick," he stammered, "I saw you motion to Jerry. I felt sorry 'cause he didn't stop, and came back to see if you were sick, you know."

"Bress the chile!" ejaculated old auntie, her black eyes bright with tears as she dropped into her seat again. "If you isn't a a born gen'lleman then I knows nuthin' about 'em. Pore old auntie is sick, honey. Clean done up with neuralgy, an' Jerry's ma's waitin' fur me to do up all their fine linen. I washes fur 'em, you know. O, O!" she broke in with a moan, "it kitches me straight in my eye sometimes," adding a moment after, "an' I wanted to ask Jerry to ride an' tell his ma I couldn't come, but he never pays no 'tention to pore ole black auntie. It takes a born gen'lleman to do that."

"I'll run back and tell her," put in Clint eagerly.

"Bress you, honey!" old auntie cried gratefully, wiping her eyes on the fringe of her shawl. "I wouldn't let you take your time from school no more nor nuthin', only his ma'll think I've foolin', an' won't give me the wash no more. I isn't in no way to lose it, fur it's mos' all I has to live on, honey. There isn't enuff pervisions in the house this minute to coax a mouse around."

"O, I'll go right away. And I'll stop and tell my mother you're sick and need things," and before old auntie had a chance to open her mouth again he was out of the house speeding away up the street.

He left his message at Jerry's home, and a few minutes later was breathlessly enlisting his startled mother's sympathy in old auntie's behalf.

"You'll go, won't you, mamma? You always go to see sick folks you know. And make Joan take her a great big basket of things. If there's not enough in the house," he added as he hurried away, "you can take what I'd eat at my dinner. I can get along without it. I've got to rush, now, I'm late, I guess."

But though he ran every step of the way to school, the last bell had rung before he reached there and the black mark he disliked so much was placed against his name.

Mrs. Warren made her preparations for a visit to old aunties without delay. Her heart was very tender as the "big basket of things" was being packed.

"Old auntie shall be well supplied with the best the house affords," she murmured softly, "and the dear boy will not have to miss his dinner either."

A short time after, when auntie Pettibone had been refreshed by some warm tea and nice toast, and was resting her aching head on the bag of hops which Mrs. Warren had opportunely placed in the big basket, her gratitude found audible expression:—

"That chile's a born gen'lleman," she said repeatedly. And as Mrs. Warren was about to take her departure after administering some soothing drops and making everything about her comfortable she broke out gratefully:—

"Please tell him fur me, Mis' Warren, he's boasted me out o' dark waters. Ole auntie'd done gone lonesome an' hungry an' sick all day but fur that bressed chile's white heart!"

When Mrs. Warren told Clint at noon about old auntie's gratefulness for her relief from pain and hunger, he found his last vestige of regret for the distasteful mark his manly act had brought him, vanishing.

"I'm proud of it!" asserted Mrs. Warren, earnestly. "I'd rather have that mark against your name to-day and feel your heart was clean, than to have Jerry's unmarred record for prompt attendance and the black mark his heart is disfigured with because of his unkind, discourteous act."

In which sentiment Clint, after a moment's deliberation, heartily concurred.—
Fannie Best Jones.

Missionary World.

"ME DIE FOR MISSIONARY."

Rev. Dr. John G. Paton, in the *Christian Work*, writes as follows:

When I went to Ambrym three years ago, 1890—at that side of the island where there is no missionary—we saw the people on the shore all lying under arms. We hesitated to go near, and whenever we approach them, they would rush to the shore and draw up their canoes. Four hours they continued doing this. At last, two lads came off in canoes, with shaking and trembling limbs, and one called out:

"You missionary?"

"Yes, I am a missionary."

"You true missionary?"

"Yes."

"You no got revolver?"

I bared my body, and showed that I had none.

"You no come to steal boys and women."

"No, we have come to tell you about God."

Thereupon he shouted:

"Yes. Me savvy [know] you! You true missionary. You bring Missi Gordon, who come here long, long ago."

I said yes, and with one rush the two lads came in their canoes, and leaped into our boat, calling ashore:

"Missi! Missi! Missi!" and something else that we did not understand. The cry was taken up and echoed throughout the whole island—you heard it everywhere—

"Missionary! Missionary!"

The people laid aside the weapons, and we soon landed, the natives rushing into the surf and taking the boat up on the beach.

As soon as I got out I saw a painted, forbidding-looking savage making towards me. I kept my eye on him; for I did not know what he was after.

He seized me by the arm, exclaiming, in burning, broken accents:

"Me die for missionary. Me want a missionary. Me no got a missionary. Me die for missionary."

O, how the iron entered into my soul as I felt the grip of that poor savage, and heard his pleading cry; for, alas! we had no means of helping him.

I said: "We cannot give you a missionary."

"Do, do, do!" he said, looking appealingly at the young men with us.

I said they were for another land.

"No. You stop long o'me. Me die; me die; me want a missionary to teach me."

If God's dear people could have heard and seen him with their own ears and eyes, then, how soon his desire would have been fulfilled!

At length we went to the boat, and he said:

"When you come with missionary?"

I said: "We cannot for a year."

"O," he pleaded, "not say twelve months. Me want missionary; me die for missionary. Not say year."

Three weary years have passed, and we have not one for them yet.

Such is the desire on many islands. O, to enter with the gospel and see its blessed effects!

CURIOSITIES OF MISSION LIFE.

Through the kindness of Dr. Marion Oliver we are favoured with a copy of the *Punjab Mission News* of 15th February last, in which we find the following interesting incident, contributed to its columns by "C. G. C.":—

In going about among the villages one is often struck with the thought how admirably missionary life is adapted in its outward circumstances to keep the worker from being exalted above measure, or depressed beyond endurance. Not only are the most various sentiments expressed in European

circles as to the value of missionary work, but the people of the country, too, help to keep the balance even. At one moment one hears such opinions and wishes as the following:—"These people only do it for what they can get: The Sarkar pays them well for every baptism: God grant their tents may fall on them and crush them:" with other accusations so unpleasant that it seems better not to repeat them.

But within a few hours probably something more encouraging is met with, as for instances:—

"Our sun arises when we see you," or, if it be a dry season, "much rain has fallen since you came."

The girls sit at their spinning wheels and sing, "May the raj of these *topiwalis* be blessed," and sweetest of all what is often said: "These people go about doing good may the Lord reward them double."

Evil reports and good reports are quite as rife as in the days of St. Paul, and thereby we are taught not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but to think soberly.

The curiosities of work among village folk are many, and especially in trying to teach the lower class Christians such astonishing statements are heard as make one feel inclined either to laugh or to despair.

After carefully going through the Creed a woman was asked whether she really believed her body would raise again. With an expression of horror she answered "Tauba, tauba," as if that were a superstition she had put far from her. Then again: (Query.—Who was Pontius Pilate?)

Answer.—Dowen Bhrao san (they were both brothers).

Query.—Where was Christ born?

Answer.—In Hyderabad.

Query.—What does bamesha kizindagi mean?

Answer.—It means that Christians never die;—but the Christian cemetery close by was rather puzzling. The poor woman who gave this answer seemed to possess a vocabulary consisting only of some four or five dozen words, she did not know what a *mez* (table) or a *chauki* (chairs) or *dari* (tent) were, so the difficult of teaching more abstract ideas was extreme. And yet she walks eight miles there and back to Church nearly every Sunday carrying a heavy baby and when this same baby was ill, she said so simply, "I am not worthy that the Lord should give him back, but perhaps He will throw my baby to me as He passes."

The three great Ethnic religions of the world that in their spirit and work are aggressive, diffusive, and missionary, are Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity. The first from a humanitarian motive only. The second with a prevailing political object. But the Gospel of Christ is spread from supreme love to Him as the chief impulse, and also from love for the world. Let us, by all means, love our country as Christ loved His, let us labour and suffer for it in His spirit, and the spirit of His great Apostle to the world, whose motto was, "To the Jew first, but also to the Gentile," for how could that love which reached out to the Gentile pass by the Jew?

Idolatry in China receives colossal sums yearly from a vast army of givers. In this heathen land all families give something to idolatry; in Christian lands some families give much, others give nothing to their religion. Heathenism depends upon everyone; Christianity upon a few. I know only one solitary thing that heathenism can teach us, and that is how to raise vast sums of money from a great army of small but persistent contributors.

"There are," says Sir John Kennaway, "1,500 Protestant missionaries in China. If they bore the same proportion to the population of the Metropolis, instead of numbering 1,500 they ought to number at least 80,000. India is even in a worse condition. It has a population of 256,000,000, and yet has less than 1,000 ordained missionaries. Africa is somewhat better off, having about the same number of missionaries to about 150,000,000 of people."